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THE COTTAGER AND ARTISAN

1892

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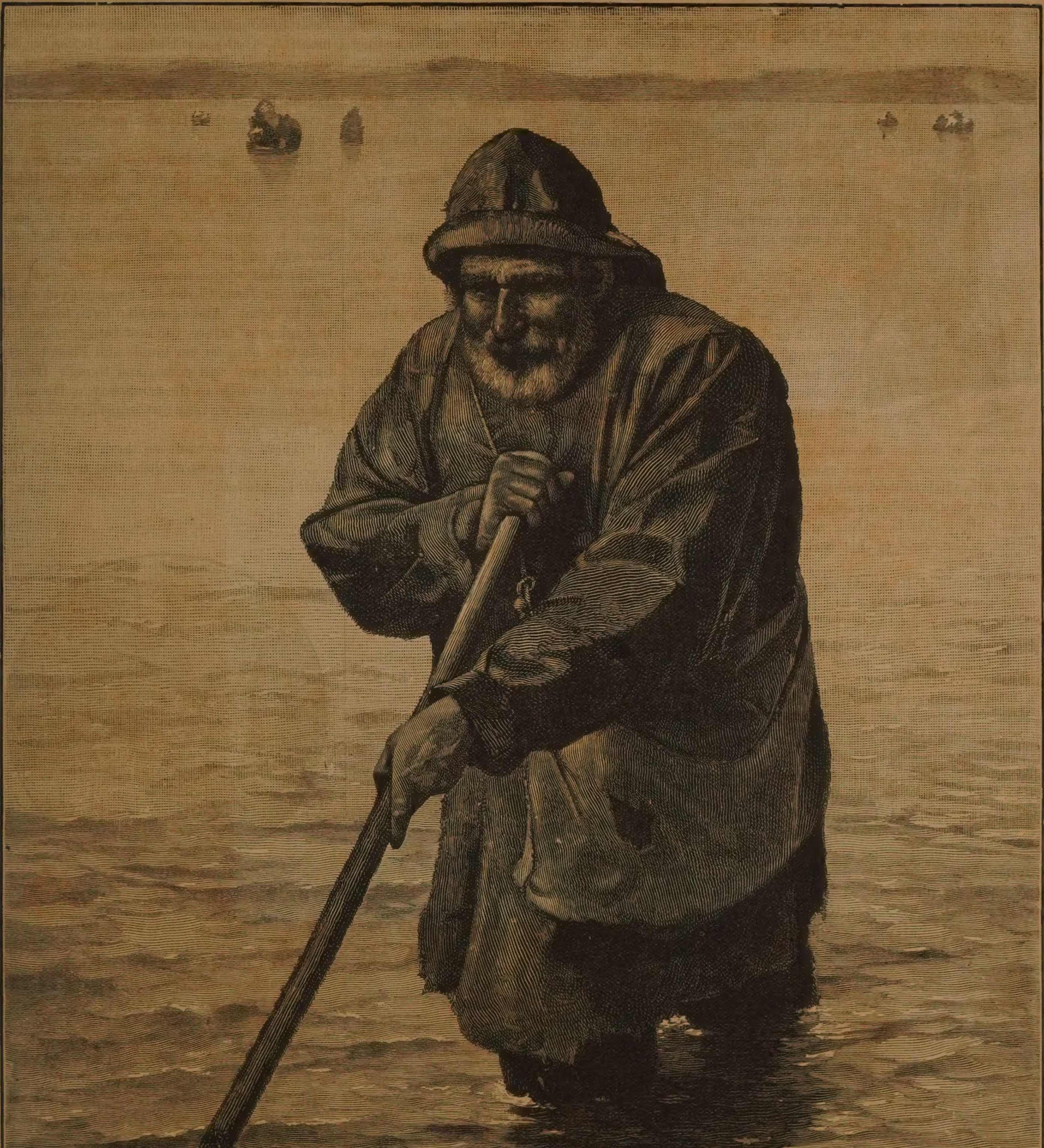


From an Original Drawing] THE SHRIMPER AT WORK. [*by G. L. Seymour.*

THE SHRIMPER'S NEW YEAR'S DAY.

It was cold work that January morning. It is not pleasant to leave your fireside and go out into the bitter winter frosts even if your walk is on land; but to plunge straight from the chimney corner into cold water is worse still.

Day after day, year in and year out, Joe Sanders had had to do that (though of course it was not so bad in the summer time), but anyhow he did not mind much. He was an old sailor, who had been to the Indies, and seen sharks and savages and all sorts of outlandish things, and now had settled down to the very humble occupation of catching shrimps! It might be rather mild certainly, after the excitements of his earlier life, but Joe was satisfied.

"'Tis like this," he would say, "I've been through many dangers and had hard times of it often in storm and tempest, but the Lord has preserved me, and now I only want to spend the rest of my days in peace till some day He'll call me to put to sea again, and I shan't be a bit afraid to cross to t'other side, for my Captain will be with me, and He'll take care that 'tis smooth sailing, and never a chance of shipwreck."

Joe Sanders lived in a little cottage at the seaside, in the Isle of Wight, he and his "missus;" he caught the shrimps, and her part was to boil them before he took them to market in the neighbouring town. There were not many people about on the lonely piece of shore where he plied his trade, but any that *were* there might have seen the sturdy figure crossing the wet sand with his net on its long pole poised on his shoulder, at any time when the tide was out.

The sun might be rising over the green hills behind, Joe was there; it might be setting in a long line of golden light flung across the sea, Joe was there again, often talking to himself (it was a way he had), as he pushed his net before him.

"I mind me," he would say, after he had been working away towards the opposite coast, and then turned in the homeward direction, "I mind me of that hymn which says—

'Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood,
Stand dressed in living green;
So to the Jews old Canaan stood,
While Jordan rolled between.'

And I've heard tell that him as wrote it made it up just over there, while he was looking at this very bit o' land. Yes, there are the sweet fields sure enough; but he didn't mean *them*—he was a thinking of heaven, and *that's* the Canaan I'm bound for, praise the Lord."

But though Joe was then cheerful and trustful, it had not been a good season, and things were not at their brightest. People had not seemed to care for shrimps as much as they used to do. The basket which took them into the town would sometimes bring them nearly all back again. That meant a very frugal supper, and nothing better at breakfast. For shrimps and no accompaniments are but poor fare.

"Never mind, Joe," his wife would say; "maybe you'll do better to-morrow." But things got worse instead of better.

I rather think their Christmas dinner was only shrimps and bread, and the fire was a great deal smaller than one wishes anybody's fire to be at that festive season. And when New Year's Day came it was not much of hope that came with it.

"I'd have liked to pay off that bit o' back rent, and a' started fair for the New Year," said Joe, with a sigh, as he put on his leggings; "but cheer up, old woman, we've trusted in the Lord for many a long winter, and He'll not leave us now. Maybe I'll get a grand lot of shrimps this morn, and then have a grand sale for them. Tis New Year's Day you know, and folks will want a feast."

A few minutes after this Joe was splashing through the retiring waves and vigorously pushing his net forwards; the opposite coast dimly seen through the early mists, the sea-gulls circling round and the gentle ripple of the tide the only sound to be heard.

Joe had a bit of poetry in his composition, and now felt soothed and comforted, as he had often done before, by these works of God, and he began saying another old-fashioned hymn, beginning, "In every object here I see, something, oh Lord, that leads to Thee." "Yes," he continued, reverently, "Oh God, Thou art near, and if Thou dost feed the seabirds and control the waves, 'tis not likely you'd forget the poor shrimper."

When Joe tramped back to the shore and began to empty his catch into the basket he came against something hard amongst the grey wriggling little shrimps.

"Why 'tis a farthing, really," quoth Joe, "I'll take it to my missus and tell her there's a bit of luck for her after all." Then he journeyed home.

The "missus" looked curiously at the farthing as Joe put it into her hand. Dirty and discoloured as it was *her* eye saw farther than his did. A rub with her sleeve brightened it a trifle.

"A farthing, Joe?" she questioned, "I don't believe it. My opinion is 'tis something better." And forthwith she proceeded to additional rubbings and mysterious cleanings, while Joe looked on in breathless eagerness.

He could hardly believe his eyes at last, for, as the result, on the table before him lay a *real golden sovereign*! It was not *very* bright certainly, for how could it be after lying, nobody knew how long, amongst shrimps and seaweed? But bright enough to leave no doubt about its genuineness and its value.

Joe's astonishment could only at first find vent in sundry exclamations of "Well, I never! who ever could a' thought it," etc. But presently with tears in his honest eyes he began to realise who had sent it.

"Wife," he whispered, "is it not just like Peter finding that piece o' money in the fish's mouth? God put it there, and He has put this among the shrimps for us. We can never know who lost it, so He must mean us to take it. Let us thank Him. We *have* always found—haven't we?—that He was good to them that trust Him."

Then they knelt down together, and in a few simple words, coming from their very hearts, they praised the Lord for this and for all His benefits. And I do not think that anybody spent a happier New's Year's Day than Joe Sanders and his "missus."

The God whom they trusted—our God and Father in Jesus Christ—is as near to us as He was to them. And as we step forth to-day into the unknown future, the best thing we can do is to take Him for our Guide and Friend. Our times of need will come, and though He may not send us help in the same way as He did to the shrimper, we may rest in perfect confidence on His promise.

"There is no want to them that fear Him . . . . and none of them that trust in Him shall be desolate." M. K. M.

THE WORKING-MAN'S BANK BOOK.

Can anything be said which is interesting or new upon the question of saving? And has the working-man with limited wages much opportunity to practise anything fresh in that direction? The writer, who has had considerable experience in working for those who are eager to learn to save, feels a positive delight in attempting to make the following remarks, and will have much increased pleasure, if only his words are the means, at least, of compelling some to think and, perhaps, to practise.

For this habit of saving is like the ring formed when a stone is thrown into a pond, spreading far and wide, and touching parts hardly thought of before. The excellent influence of the institution of Benefit and Friendly Societies has taught many the satisfaction of feeling that when the time of misfortune comes, they have a good friend to fall back upon; and one of the best of friends, because made from their own industry.

One cannot help remarking the difference in general bearing between the man who puts by something, however small, for the "rainy day" and the improvident man who does not consider the future as well as the present. The time of distress comes, perhaps quite unexpectedly, and the improvident man suddenly finds himself almost on the verge of destitution. It may be necessary to give up part of the home and seek aid in charity. But this will not suffice, and the man, disheartened and distressed, sinks from one level to another till, in some cases, his existence is very bitterness.

The writer speaks thus strongly because a case has come under his notice, which is only too true an illustration. A man held an excellent position in a good office, but the business was at one time transferred to new masters. The man's capabilities were marred by the fact of his being too fond of drink. So when the transfer came, he was surprised to find that some were not taken over by the new firm, himself amongst the number. He had made no provision for his family, but felt that it would not be long before he obtained another situation.

But his hopes were not realised. He has become poorer and poorer, until he feels that it is useless to attempt to secure a post. And, further, the labour of maintaining the family is now thrown upon the wife. This is a gloomy picture, though true, but there is a bright opposite in the man who provides against the season of trouble. Look at the difference in character. He is cleanly, industrious, sober, and frugal, and feels an honourable pride and independence in that he can make claim upon a friend of his own creation.

It is very hard to change the habits of men whose characters are settled; and this only points out more clearly how necessary a duty it is that we should train our children to save. The child thus trained will, in all probability, prove to be economical as a man, and his happiness will be increased. By being economical we do not mean being miserly; for the two things are quite different. Miserliness will never produce happiness. But the economical man feels much more real pleasure than the thriftless in his spending, and the thrifty man is more than compensated for his abstention from indulgence in the independence and self-respect gained by the consciousness of providence. But that is not all. The man becomes more industrious. Anxious to do still better he thinks more, and takes the greatest pleasure in trying to improve himself and his position.

The excellent institution of Savings Banks was commenced in Scotland, and has now spread throughout the civilised world. But it is about the Post Office Savings Bank that we wish to speak specially, as affording such excellent opportunities to accumulate the smallest savings. It provides a place of deposit for small savings, allowing a small but reasonable interest, with full liberty of withdrawing at any time the whole or part of the money saved, and undertakes all transactions free of expense.

There is no risk, a very important consideration, for the man with small savings cannot afford to run any risk. No amount smaller than a shilling is received; but at the Post Office can be obtained a form, to which penny stamps can be affixed, and when the twelve spaces have been filled, the form will be received in the place of actual money. All the necessary books are provided gratis, and the postal communications entail no expense to the depositor.

We know of one plan pursued by a family which we consider an excellent plan, both in principle and practice. At the home is kept a locked money-box, into which is put, as frequently as possible—almost daily—a coin or two. The moneys thus placed, being so trifling, are hardly noticed, much less missed. Every Saturday this money is counted, and made up to a shilling, or two shillings, &c., as the case may be. This sum is then deposited at the Post Office, and in this family quite a considerable amount has been saved, and, at the same time, not missed.

Saving under any circumstances is good, but the excellence lies in the regularity of the saving. One may feel inclined to say there is no necessity to go to the Post Office at all, as the money could be kept in the home box. But this putting away in the Post Office is one of the best safeguards against falling away from the good habit. If the money is kept at home, there come moments when it would be very convenient to take out a little for a present purpose, with the intention to return it quickly. It might not be for a necessity, but one would find it convenient. Now, if the money were in the Post Office, the moment of temptation would pass, and with it the desire to use the money for the purpose thought of; so that the depositor would become thereby strengthened in his habit.

We said previously that it is very hard to change settled characters. It is never too late to change or start afresh, but with the habit taught in childhood, we are sowing for a golden harvest. Encourage your children at every opportunity. There are banks (some in connection with the Post Office) in many schools. We know of one where about £80 is saved every year. In Belgium, the Government encourage thrift among school children, by giving as prizes bank-books, with a small amount paid on. Do help your children then in this, you who are parents.

Some will be more ambitious than those whom we have sketched in outline. To these the Post Office still holds out a helping hand. Larger sums are now transferable to Government Consols at a fixed and reasonable commission. This is a perfectly safe investment, and will bear the current interest of the day. The Government have also just made arrangements by which the dividends earned can be added to the capital, and so count for compound interest.

There are, in some districts, excellent arrangements for the systematic helping and working of thrift. In a certain Liverpool paper, the weekly return is given of the Liverpool Penny Savings Bank Association. One quotation will suffice to show the great benefit and usefulness of such a work. The weekly return made July 30, 1890, showed that in the town about £80 had been received from more than 4,000 depositors.

It is not always the man with the largest income who is best off. It is a duty for all to provide, each according to his means, for the uncertain future, but he who learns the habit of providence will find the practice a pleasure.

T. Rowles.

THE ROLLING YEAR.

SWIFT on the wings of fleeting time,
The year rolls round, and steals away;
And as it rolls, should teach mankind,
Their lives are hastening to decay.

Another year has taken flight,
Passed like a shadow or a dream;
Or as a transient gleam of light,
Or floating bubble on the stream.

So year on year successive glides,
And soon completes the life of man;
Through fourscore years it swiftly slides,
And finishes his narrow span.

Since, then, from man the time's concealed,
When he must quit this earthly sphere;
May he, from sacred truths revealed,
For that momentous change prepare!

ON TENDING OUR SICK FOLK.

HAVING been lately called to the sick bed of a dear friend, I have reflected often, in the lonely night watches, on the privileges of tending our sick folk, and the best means of alleviating, as far as possible, the heavy burden laid upon them.

Foremost amongst the most womanly work stands that of tending our sick folk. So much has been written about professional nursing that I do not propose to speak of this, but rather to confine myself to recording my thoughts on the *ordinary* tending of the sick, which may at any moment fall to the lot of mothers, wives, or sisters.

Let me, then, first mention two leading maxims for the nurse; never say "I can't," and never give up hope.

It 's wonderful what you can do when you are convinced that it must be done, and when once hope goes out of your heart, strength goes out of your hands.

Even if you know your patient must die in spite of all you can do, can you not still hope? Hope, that your tender care may smooth the pillow, and keep away all ruffling influences from without; hope, that when the trial is over the chastened spirit may soar to another land where sickness is unknown

Hope and determination then are the mainsprings of nursing, but there are at least eight minor ones. First in order comes *reverence.* Human nature laid low, writhing in agony, raving in delirium, or whining from sheer physical weakness, is a pitiable object, but one which we may get to look down upon as we become constantly associated with it, unless we realise the Divine image in the sufferer.

"In the image of God created He him," and never is that image more plain than when God has laid His hand on him in sickness.

If we could only realise that all sickness of a Christian is a participating in the suffering life of our Lord, we should come to reverence the subject of so high a privilege and treat him with due respect.

Next comes *quietness.* A rustling petticoat or dress, creaky or even heavy boots, slamming of doors, rattling of cups, jingling of keys, or even the dangling of some article of jewellery against a button, are so many thorns in the beds of our sick folk.

A serge or other soft falling dress, devoid of all superfluous ornamentation, thin indoor boots or shoes in which you can walk swiftly without going on your toes; a light firm hand on a door, and an oily feather for recalcitrant hinges, all trifles in themselves, will be inestimable blessings to the patient. Practice will soon show you that there are twenty different ways of sparing noise; as, for instance, a piece of wood instead of a poker, and a pair of gloves instead of a shovel.

Above all, avoid whispering.

There are some women who never take a baby in their arms without swinging it backwards and forwards, as if it had been born and bred in a pendulum and needed the motion; and there are hundreds of people who never enter a sick-room without whispering.

Now, as a matter of fact, of the two evils it would be far better to make a noise. The patient, if he be conscious, strains his ears to learn what is being said, and if he be too ill to do this the buzz-buzz of whispering is far more irritating than an ordinarily modulated voice. Quietness includes, too, an absence of all fussiness. However anxious you may feel, never allow yourself to get flurried; it will send up the temperature and quicken the pulse of your patient, and make your own hand unsteady.

How can you expect to cut a blister neatly, for instance, if you are fretting and fuming lest you should dig the point of the scissors into your victim's neck? Take it for granted that you will do it just in the right place, and that your dressing will prove a success, and you will hardly fail.

"In quietness and confidence shall be your strength," is a splendid motto for both patient and nurse. The reverent manner, the bright hopeful face, the quiet voice and step and firm hand are the doctor's best helps; for remember, that however much may lie in the power of the medical man, far more lies in the hands of the nurse who has to carry out his orders.

E. M. W.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THOMAS BRITTON, THE MUSICAL COAL-DEALER.

Thomas Britton, the celebrated "musical small-coal man," was born in Northamptonshire about the year 1654. At an early age he came up to London, and apprenticed himself to a small coal-dealer in Clerkenwell for seven years. At the end of this time he returned to his native place, but his money being soon spent he came back to London, and set up in business for himself in a stable.

Duchess of Devonshire visiting Britton's concert.

Britton divided this stable into two stories, using the lower as his coal shop and living in the upper, a low room reached by a ladder from outside. In this unlikely place he started, in 1678, his musical club. Every Thursday for about forty years there was a vocal and instrumental concert, at which the most distinguished musicians of the day assisted, the great Handel himself playing the organ, which had only five stops. Britton's harpsichord (the forerunner of the modern piano) was said to be the finest in Europe. Leaders of fashion like the Duchess of Devonshire were amongst the audience.

The loft over the stable being inconveniently small and badly ventilated, Britton took a better room in the next house for his concerts. This, however, did not pay. So he returned to his old quarters, where, as one writer expresses it, with more force than elegance, "any Body that is willing to take a hearty Sweat, may have the Pleasure of hearing many notable Performances in the charming Science of Musick." But this the audience did not mind.

Besides his musical tastes Britton took great interest in chemistry. He constructed for himself "an amazing laboratory" at a small cost. A Welsh gentleman was so struck with this that he gave Britton a handsome fee to make him a similar one in Wales. The coal-dealer's knowledge of books brought him into connection with the Earls of Oxford and Pembroke, the Duke of Devonshire, and other noblemen. These, with Britton among them, used to make book-hunting expeditions through the city, the latter wearing his blue smock and carrying the coal sack which he had been using in his business through the day. He was never ashamed of his trade, but almost to the day of his death he continued to sell coal in the streets of London.

Britton's death was as singular as his life. He was known to be extremely superstitious, and a famous ventriloquist one day told him in an assumed voice that unless he immediately said the Lord's Prayer on his knees he would die in a few hours. Britton at once did as he was told, but never got over the fright, and actually died in a few days, aged upwards of sixty. This happened in 1714

His collection of musical instruments was sold for the benefit of his widow, realising about £180. One writer has thus described his character:—

"He was an extraordinary and a very valuable man much admired both by the gentry, even of those of the best quality, and by all others that had any manner of regard for probity, ingenuity, diligence, and humility." In person he was short, stout, and of an "honest, ingenuous countenance."

BESIDE THE STREAM.

I sat with pitcher in my hand
Beside the flowing stream,
Till overcome with noon-tide heat,
Behold! I had a dream.

I dreamt that angels bright and fair
Were standing on the bank,
And lo! a voice came floating from
The foremost of the rank.

"We are the Messengers of Love,"
It sang within mine ear,
"And unto thirsty ones of earth
Our tidings should be dear.

"The water that is flowing here
Thou'lt drink to thirst again,
But we can tell thee of a stream
To quench thy thirsty pain."

Then one and all in chorus sang,
"Aye! we the message give,
That Christ the living fountain is:
Come unto Him, and live!"

I woke—the happy dream was o'er,
The Messengers had flown;
But Jesus Christ was in my heart,
And I—was not alone!

M. M.

THE SURE KEEPER.

"YES, sir, I know all that; but it's sad to leave my poor wife and little children, who have never known want nor trouble, in a hard world where every one has enough to do for his own. I don't know how to look it in the face."

"Yet, Thomas, you can trust our God for yourself; you know Him as your Father as well as your God."

"I do, sir; I can say with the apostle, 'I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.' I know that when He calls me hence, it will be but to pass through the valley of the shadow of death—and a shadow never hurts anybody—to enter into His own glorious and blessed presence."

"Then why not commit to the same Sure Keeper your wife and little ones? it is not only His gracious permission, but His command: 'Leave thy fatherless children.' Indeed, I called to-day to speak to you on this very subject, to bring you our New Year's watchword, and tell you something of the sermon, if you were strong enough to bear it. See, here is the watchword, 'The Lord is thy Keeper.'"

"Thank you, sir; you never forget us; it is a good word—a good word for me, and better still for those I am so soon to leave. I am much easier to-day, and shall like well to hear all you can kindly tell me."

"Well, then, this was my text, 'The Lord is thy Keeper;' the words with which David encouraged himself in his trouble, for this psalm was evidently written in great distress, when he was looking round for help, and declares, 'My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth;' and in this short psalm he speaks of God as his Keeper or Preserver no less than six times.

"Do we ask *when* God keeps us? The best plan is to seek the answer in His own words, then there can be no mistake. He is speaking of His vineyard, a name for His Church, His people, and He says, 'I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.' 'Every moment.' 'Night and day.' Is not that enough? And in our psalm He adds, 'for evermore.'"

"It is indeed enough; what could He say more?" And the sick man closed his eyes, as if satisfied, and drinking in the comfort of the promise; and his pastor heard him softly whisper from time to time, "every moment," "night and day," "for evermore."

* * *

DO THY DUTY.

'TIS not by dreaming and delay,
But doing something every day,
That wins the laurel and the bay,
And crowns the work of duty.

Be satisfied that thou art right,
And that thy deed will bear the light,
Then execute it with thy might,
For that will be thy duty.

In Nature's boundless universe,
Thou wilt not find that deadly curse,
An atom to its work averse,
An idler shirking duty.

The planets as they roll on high,
The river as it rusheth by,
For ever and for ever cry,
"On, man, and do thy duty!"

Edward Capern.

TURNING-POINTS.

"The entrance of Thy words giveth light."
Psalm 119. 130.

A PROFANE shopman crams into his pocket a leaf of a Bible, and reads the last words of Daniel: "Go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days," and begins to think what his own lot will be when days are ended.

A Göttingen professor opens a big printed Bible to see if he has eyesight enough to read it, and alights on the passage, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not," and in reading it the eyes of his understanding are enlightened.

Cromwell's soldier opens his Bible to see how far the musket-ball has pierced, and finds it stopped at the verse, "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth; and walk in the ways of thy heart and the sight of thine eyes; but know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment."

And in a frolic the Kentish soldier opens a Bible which his broken-hearted mother had sent him, and the first sentence that is seen is the text, so familiar in boyish days, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden," and the weary profligate repairs for rest to Jesus Christ.

In the Bible, life is expressly called a *Walk*. In setting out, be sure you take the right path, or every step will lead you further astray. Choose the narrow way, not the broad; take the way of life, not the way of death; let

Christ be your way, for no one cometh unto the Father but by Him, and no one will ever reach the happy home but those who seek it by Him who is the Living Way.

When you have chosen the way, and are walking in it, study your guide-book well. The Bible is your guide-book. Till the occasion arises, and the particular step in our journey has to be taken, we cannot know what God has to say to us in His Word to meet our need then.

The journey of life is divided into stages. What are days and months and years but the stages into which life's journey is portioned? The change of the year marks the end of one important stage, and the beginning of another. It is a time for thought; for looking around us, and looking back, and looking ahead. What progress have we made? Have we loitered? Is the day of our life drawing to a close, and yet are we far behind on our way?

Happy New Year, if it see your first step towards God! Walk in God's way more earnestly than you ever walked in sin's way. You have lost much time; make good use of what is left. Step out manfully in the strength of God.

God will help you. And He will cause you to find, as all who walk in them find, that the ways of true religion "are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."

◆

HONESTY REWARDED.

A NOBLEMAN travelling in Scotland some years ago was asked for alms, in the High Street of Edinburgh, by a little ragged boy. He said he had no change, upon which the boy offered to secure it. His lordship, in order to get rid of him, gave him a piece of silver, which the boy conceiving was to be changed, ran off for the purpose.

On his return, not finding his benefactor, who he expected would have waited, he watched for several days in the place where he had received the money.

At length the nobleman happened again to pass that way. The boy accosted him, and put the change he had procured into his hand, counting it with great exactness. His lordship was so pleased with the boy's honesty that he placed him at school, with the assurance of providing for him for the future.

◆

THE DEAD LINE.

AROUND the guarded camp occupied by prisoners of war a line is drawn called the "dead line," marking off a space beyond which the prisoners may not come. They are not allowed to come to the outer edge, or to the extreme limits of the enclosure. They are to keep at a distance from the boundary, and the space marked by the dead line tells them how far they can come with safety. Crossing that line, they are liable to be shot at sight; remaining within it, they are safe from harm.

God guards men from sin, and He does it by commanding them to *halt at a distance from it;* by drawing a dead line around it; restraining men, not only from evil acts, but from evil thoughts and evil desires. He not only forbids men to do the prohibited thing, but he forbids them to wish to do it, or think of doing it.

He marks the beginning of evil in the secret thoughts of the heart, and warns men away from every form of evil, nipping it in the bud and bidding them beware of the very thought that leads to sin.

Many unwary souls have been lost by crossing the dead line dallying with temptations, going too near the presence of evil, until finally they have been drawn onward and swept downward into the abyss.

The Christian's safety is not in seeing how firmly he can stand in the midst of temptation, but how far he can flee from its very presence, so that in thought and purpose and heart, as well as in life, he may be like the great Exemplar, "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners."

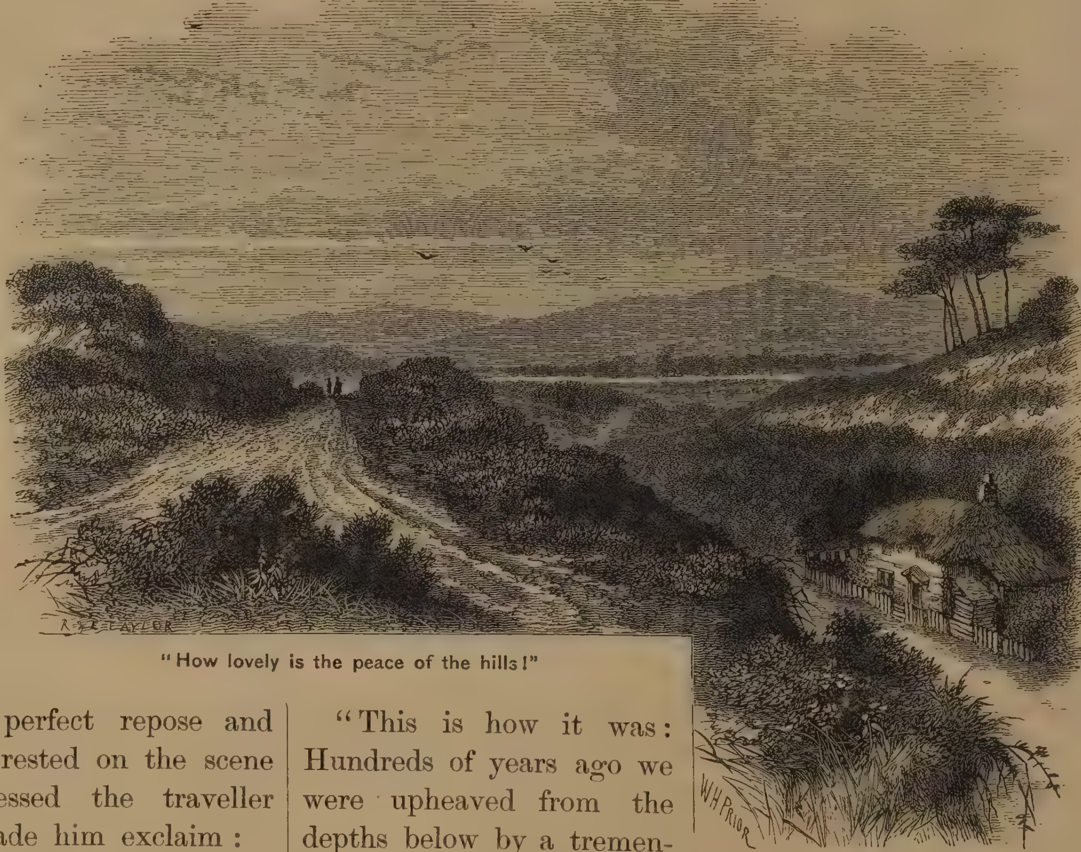
◆

A LESSON FROM THE HILLS.

A TRAVELLER was journeying through one of the loveliest districts of England, a fair and fertile plain bounded by a range of hills wild and open, and which, as he paused to gaze, were standing out in clear, sharp outline against the sky.

For it was early morning, and the sun being in the opposite direction, every hollow, and every patch of fern just tinged with the autumn's brown, were marked with marvellous distinctness to the eye.

It was all like a picture—the green slopes, the clumps of mountain ash with their brilliant berries, the jagged peaks above. It was as still as a picture, too;



"How lovely is the peace of the hills!"

it was the perfect repose and peace which rested on the scene which impressed the traveller most and made him exclaim:

"How lovely is the peace of the hills! No storm could ever have ruffled it; no tumult of earth could disturb it; from everlasting to everlasting those hills have stood; they have never ceased to look up into that calm blue sky; they know no change or fluctuation. Oh, that our tossed and troubled hearts were like them!"

Then as he turned and looked at the level country, he continued —"How flat! how uninviting! Why cannot we always have what is so elevating, so grand, so restful? The hills for me, with their solemn silence and their peace. The hills for me!"

"Do you think we were *always* calm?" said the hills in reply. "We could tell you a different tale, an old-world story. Our calm has been won by conflict; our peace by convulsions great and many.

"This is how it was: Hundreds of years ago we were upheaved from the depths below by a tremendous earthquake. Water passed over us, fire tried us, we were shattered, we were cemented again slowly, slowly as the ages passed on.

"You call us 'the everlasting hills,'—it is not so; we were built up by one agency after another, in tumult and unrest, till at last, at last—oh, yes! the *un*rest is all over now, and in the solemn peace of which you speak we look down upon you like very guardian angels in the fret and stir of your daily life. But remember we have gained our peace, we do not inherit it."

"Is it so?" replied the traveller; "then oh! what a picture of something higher even than yon beautiful hills, even the Christian's peace.

"We see the calm upon his brow, the rest in God which breathes through all he says and all he does; but we have *not* seen all that has gone before—the conflict with sin, the struggles of the daily warfare with the world, the flesh, and the devil, the shattering of earthly hopes, the fiery trials of sickness and bereavement, most of all the resistance of the human will to God's will. But this once conquered there comes the peace, and we see it now.

"The earthquake of sorrow has, through His grace, moulded and fashioned the spiritual life, and His will accepted has brought rest. Thus he wears upon his brow a sign perfect as the peace upon the hills this summer morning—a token that the struggle is past and God in Christ is reigning in his inmost heart.

"Take courage, then, weary one, storm-tossed one, tired one; the storm will bring in the calm in God's good time; the conflict through His grace will end in—Peace!"

M. K. M.

A STORY OF THE WHITBY COAST.

A FEW years ago, in the early autumn, I spent some days in the quaintly beautiful old town of Whitby. Although railways and speculators have found their way thither, there is yet an old-world air about the place, that charms the visitor.

The winds had already begun to strip the foliage from the trees, and thus to rob of their beauty some of the inland walks around the town, but to me nothing was so attractive as to wander, when the tide was out, beneath those stern, darkly towering cliffs on the eastern side of the harbour, and listen to the ceaseless roll of the music of the sea, as it plashed and swept between the rocks that lay scattered around their base.

It was on the top of these cliffs, looking out over the German Ocean, that the grand old abbey of St. Hilda's once stood, whose ruins still remain; and it was here, underneath them, that the sea often beat with a wild fury and tossed its spray far on to the fields above, and then, woe to the mariner whose ship was drawn in here by the set of the waves!

For those waves that, as I stood there, were rolling in upon us in harmless beauty, dashing over the rocks or stealthily threading their way between them, were then changed into rushing torrents—mountain breakers that carried all before them, and tossed themselves and their burdens with thundering noise on those terrible cliffs.

One day, as I was sitting here looking up at the great gloomy cliffs above me, an old weather-beaten sailor came up, and touching his hat, said, in his homely Yorkshire dialect, "No escape up those cliffs in a storm, sir."

"I expect not," I replied, turning to him; "however grand they seem now, they must be awful then."

"Aye, indeed, sir," returned he, "you 're right. I have seen it, with the wind from the nor'-east, blowing the huge waves in upon this spot, until it was one mass of raging foam. No worse place on the coast than this, and to be underneath these cliffs then, sir, is to be lost indeed."

"I don't doubt it," I replied.

"Yes, sir," continued the old man, seeing I was interested in his talk, "I remember one day, I was on the other side of the harbour. None of us had ventured out that day, for the wind had been steadily rising with that sobbing sound that foretokens a storm. It is curious, sir," continued the old man meditatively, "very curious, how, before a storm, the wind will often rise sobbing like a woman in distress, as if it knew the desolation it would make

"And sure enough it came—a terrible night, sir. A lot of us stood upon the pier looking out into the darkness, and could see nought but the great crested waves, that were driven by the roaring wind and dashed over this very spot on to those cliffs.

"Yes, sir, the lifeboat-men were there, for God only knew how soon they might be needed, and we could not see a ship until the danger had come, and it was already close on to the shore. So the men were ready to start, sir.

"At last there was a cry—a ship! A lot of us had seen it together, it was already in danger, carried by a great wave on to the rocks. We sprang to our place in the lifeboat—for I was one of the crew then—but ere we could get round to rescue them, the ship broke up and all hands were lost, sir—not a soul aboard saved."

I rose to my feet and looked around. The place had assumed a new awfulness to me. These very rocks on which I stood were the place of danger—those huge black-browed cliffs that frowned above us had often witnessed such scenes as this—and every one of these poor fellows had souls to be saved as well as bodies. I wonder if any one cared for them.

Whitby Harbour—the Abbey in the distance.

I must have said this out aloud, for my sailor friend answered it. "You see we sailors are a rough lot, sir; and are in port only for a little time, and it's only then that folks has a chance to do anything for us."

"Ah, well," I said, "I hope, friend, that in that greater storm that all of must meet you and I may be ready, so that we may be saved then."

"Amen, sir," said the old man; "I think I know what you mean, that when death comes we may have a Pilot who will take us safe into the port of heaven. Yes, sir," continued he, reverently taking off his hat and looking up, "though I've been as bad as any, I do trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, and do believe He will keep me safe in the great storm that is coming."

And so we parted, each of us a partaker of that blessed hope that Christ gives to them that trust Him.

J. Scott James.

NAT, THE QUARRYMAN.

By Eglanton Thorne,

Author of "The Old Worcester Jug," "Nathan Quilter's Fall," etc.

Chapter I.—The Worst Man in the Village.

PARSON TRELAWNEY rode forth from the vicarage on his quiet well-groomed nag. He was an old man, and had held the living of Trevena for well-nigh fifty years; but he still sat his horse erectly, and his eyes looked hither and thither through his thick-rimmed spectacles with a keen observant glance.

It was a fresh bright morning at the beginning of August. The sky was blue, with white and grey clouds travelling swiftly across it; and an invigorating breeze came from the sea, breaking in snowy billows below the rugged cliffs. It was a day to make one glad to have a home on the romantic coast of Cornwall, and indifferent to the disadvantages connected with its remote situation.

"The Parson," as his parishioners almost invariably called him, loved the spot in which his life for so long a period had been passed. He was wont to say that the "lines had fallen unto him in pleasant places," and that he would not willingly exchange his parish for any other in England.

He loved Trevena and its people, and the people for the most part loved him. They appreciated his benevolent, kindly nature, and the friendly interest he took in them and their concerns. It was never an intrusive interest, nor did he ever interfere with what they considered to be not his business. He did not appear to be keenly aware of who were church goers or who were not, but treated all alike. He was a good old man, and every one respected him; but evil-doers were not held back by any fear of consequences where he was concerned.

It was well that the parson could interest himself in the joys and sorrows of his flock, for his own domestic life was a lonely one. Nearly twenty years had passed since his wife was laid to rest beneath the turf of the storm-swept churchyard on the cliff.

His sons—he had never had a daughter—were all far from him. Sometimes one would come to visit him, and occasionally the voices of little grandchildren would make merry the old garden at the vicarage. But this happened only at rare intervals. As a rule, the wide hall and staircase echoed drearily to the old man's tread, and the housekeeper and the two servants who helped her found their duties very light, though they would never have owned it.

The parson looked about him approvingly as he rode up the village street, between neat slate-roofed cottages with tiny gardens showing a profusion of fragrant flowers.

If ever Trevena could be called lively it was in the month of August. Out-of-the-world place though it was, ten miles from the nearest railway station, it was winning a reputation for fine air and grand scenery, and strangers found it out during the summer months. Some of the more ambitious of those who had rooms to let were even beginning to talk about "the season," though Trevena was as far as possible removed from the kind of place which has a season, and to which fashionable people resort.

Yet the parson's eye marked with gratification certain signs of new life in the village on this August morning. Two vehicles stood before the door of the Molesworth Arms, the one hotel of the place. A couple of young fellows wearing tweed knickerbocker suits, peaked caps, and knapsacks strapped to their shoulders, were about to start on their day's tramp. There was quite a group of strangers gathered about the door of the little post-office, awaiting the arrival of the day's letters.

The vicar looked at them eagerly. He liked meeting strangers; especially was he drawn to them if they appeared to be interested in antiquarian research, his own particular hobby. He loved to show to strangers his old church, with its one perfect specimen of a Norman arch, and the Lady Chapel, which was Early English in architecture, and the quaint old monuments in the churchyard.

The ruined chapel on the cliff, too—how he would enjoy showing that, and unfolding to an appreciative mind all he thought he had discovered concerning it.

As the parson's keen eyes scanned the little knot of persons, hoping to see a clerical hat, or perhaps to discern on some manly countenance the tokens of kindred tastes, a lady detached herself from the group and advanced towards him with a smile and bow of greeting.

"Good morning, Mr. Trelawney!"

For a moment the old man looked at her doubtfully; but at the sound of her voice his face changed. A look of surprise and pleasure came to it, and, with a smile of hearty welcome, he checked his horse and bent from the saddle to shake her hand.

"Miss Trotter! Is it really you at Trevena again? I am very glad to see you."

"Thank you. You cannot be more glad than I am to find myself here once more. You know I told you that I meant to come back."

"Yes, I know you said so; but so many say that. I thought your promise was—well, like many ladies' promises."

"Now, I will not let you traduce my sex," said Miss Trotter, playfully. She was not exactly a young lady; indeed, the hair which showed beneath the little tourist cap she wore was quite grey; but she had a young, bright manner, and her face was bright with such a winning expression that people found her charming before they had time to observe how very faulty her features were.

"Well, well, you at any rate deserve no reproaches, for you have kept your promise," said Mr. Trelawney, his eyes twinkling with pleasure; "when did you come?"

"Last evening. My aunt is with me, and we are at Eagle Cottage as before. We were so glad to find Mrs. Rush's rooms unoccupied."

"Ah! and Mrs. Rush was glad too, I'll warrant. I shall give myself the pleasure of calling on Mrs. Brownlow as soon as possible, and then I hope you will honour me with a visit. You must take compassion on a lonely old man."

"We should be delighted," said Miss Trotter; "I am longing to see your charming old house again and all your interesting things. And how about the ruined chapel on the cliff, Mr. Trelawney? Have you found out anything more about it?"

"I daresay—but I forget how long it is since you were here."

"Six years," said Miss Trotter, promptly. "You must surely have discovered something in six years."

"Perhaps—I don't know; but I will look up my note-books, and we can go through the evidence together. I know you are interested in such things."

"Of course I am," replied Miss Trotter, "but I must not detain you now. Good-bye."

She moved a step or two towards the post-office, but, as a thought struck her, she turned and was at his bridle again ere the nag had roused himself to move on.

"By-the-bye, Mr. Trelawney," she said, in her clear, quick tones; "do you know a man living at Trevena of the name of Nathaniel Youlton?"

"Nathaniel Youlton," he repeated, looking surprised—"Nat Youlton, as he is commonly called—of course I know him. Why, I have known him ever since he was a baby. I remember baptising him."

"And what sort of man is he?"

The vicar seemed puzzled how to answer this question; but it was not because he was ignorant of the character of Nathaniel Youlton.

"Well," he said at last, and his aged tones quavered more than usual; "I don't see much of Nat Youlton now; he seldom crosses my path; but I am afraid there is no doubt that he is—about the worst man in the village."

Miss Trotter's face fell as she heard the words; but they did not wholly surprise her.

"Why do you say that?" she asked, anxiously. "In what way is he so bad?"

Again the vicar paused ere he answered.

"I hardly know," he said; "the man has a bad character here; he's a wild, reckless, ne'er-do-well kind of fellow. He works at the slate quarries when he *does* work; but they say he will often leave his work for days, and wander about the country."

"Does he drink?" asked Miss Trotter.

"Not as a rule. He is not what you would call a drunkard. He is simply a wild, lawless fellow, with whom no one can do anything."

"Have you tried?"

The parson looked embarrassed by the question.

"Well, no," he said; "you see he does not give me the chance. He never comes to church."

"Oh!" said Miss Trotter. The ejaculation was so expressive that the old clergyman felt annoyed.

"Why do you ask me all these questions about Nat Youlton?" he inquired sharply, "what do you know about him?"

"Very little. I have never seen him; but I knew his mother. She died at Plymouth, and I visited her in her last illness. She often spoke to me of her son."

"She should not have left him," said the parson, testily; "he was a steadier fellow whilst she was here to look after him. He went away himself soon after, and was gone for months—no one knows where—and when he came back he was ten times worse than he was before. She had no business to go and leave him to himself."

"She went to seek her daughter, who had left her under very unhappy circumstances," said Miss Trotter. "The son was angry with his sister, who had brought disgrace upon them, and he told his mother that if she went after Mary, he would have nothing more to do with her. But a mother's heart moved her to make every effort to save her daughter."

"Ah!" said the parson, looking grave. "Poor Mary Youlton, hers was a sad story! Such a pretty girl she was—the prettiest in the village—with a cheek like a wild rose, and as blithe and happy as a bird! One would never have thought—— Did her mother find her?"

"No, they never met again; but Mrs. Youlton had good news of her at last. Some Christian friends had found out the girl in her misery. They were the means of bringing her to Christ, and had helped her to begin a new life. She was abroad and doing well when her mother heard of her."

"Ah, I am glad to hear that," said the parson.

"It was an unspeakable comfort to her mother on her death-bed," said Miss Trotter; "she had prayed constantly for her daughter, and she was very thankful for such an answer to her prayers."

"Ay, she was a good woman, was Mrs. Youlton," said the vicar.

"She prayed for her son, too, and had faith to believe that her prayers for him would also be heard," said Miss Trotter. "The man for whom such a mother has prayed should not be given up as hopeless, even if he is the worst man in the village, Mr. Trelawney."

Whilst Miss Trotter talked to the vicar the letters had been distributed, and the little crowd gathered at the post-office had dispersed. Save for the children playing in it, the village street was almost deserted now.

Just as the lady spoke, however, a man came out of the tap-room of the inn. He was a tall, well-made fellow, whose closely-knit frame betokened great strength. He wore a corduroy suit surmounted by a rough pilot coat. A soft felt hat covered his rough brown locks. The face beneath was tanned by exposure to the elements; but it was a bold, handsome face, though its fierce, defiant expression might well incline the timid to give its owner a wide berth.

Miss Trotter glanced at the countenance with an instinctive admiration of the fine, strong features and rich colouring, ere she heard the vicar say, in a low tone, "Why, here he is! The very man we are speaking of. Good-day, Youlton!"

"Good-day," responded the man in a surly tone, and he did not touch his cap. There was no amiable light in his eyes as he turned them for a moment on the parson.

At that moment a waggonette drawn by a pair of horses came rattling round the corner from the stables of the Molesworth Arms. A tiny child, playing before one of the cottages, darted into the middle of the road just as the horses turned the corner.

Miss Trotter uttered a cry of alarm; but ere she could move the big man in the corduroy suit had sprung into the road, seized the child in his strong arms, and swung her out of reach of the dangerous hoofs.

He held the wee girl aloft for a moment, shaking her playfully from side to side ere he placed her on the ground; but the little one felt no fear in his giant's grasp. Her merry laugh rang out on the air. She had no idea of the peril from which he had saved her; and ere the spectators could recover from their surprise, the man, echoing the child's laugh, was half way down the street.

"That child had a narrow escape," said the parson.

"Yes, indeed," said Miss Trotter, still agitated. "How quick that man was! Ere I had time to think what to do he had done it. Where is the child's mother? Why does she not look after her little one?"

"That is Mrs. Trewarne's little girl," said the parson, looking more closely at the child, who had resumed her play in happy ignorance of the excitement she had caused. "Her mother is a young widow, and has to work hard to maintain her. I expect she is away at work now. The child is doubtless a burden to her, yet she would break her heart if any harm came to her."

"Of course she would," said Miss Trotter. "Such a pretty little thing as she is, with her round rosy face and yellow curls."

"Oh, as for that," said the parson, with a sly, humorous twinkle in his eyes, "I believe it would be the same if she were ugly. I am glad the poor little mortal escaped. It was well Youlton was passing."

"And that is the man you call the worst in the village!" exclaimed Miss Trotter; "I don't believe it. The man whose arms were so prompt to save a little child, and who could smile on her as I saw him smile, cannot be wholly bad."

"Well, I hope you may be right," said the vicar. "Good morning, Miss Trotter. I shall hope to look in on your aunt to-morrow;" and he rode on.

Miss Trotter went into the post-office to get her letters, and as the postmaster kept a shop very miscellaneously stocked, she was able to buy some lollipops for the unconscious heroine of the late excitement. Why she did this it would be difficult to explain; but the little one smiled sweetly when she saw the twisted paper in the lady's hand.

"What is your name?" asked Miss Trotter.

"Mary," replied the rosy lips; and then, the sweets being placed in the fat little palm, the child proceeded to make herself sticky with the same, and nothing more was to be drawn from her.

Miss Trotter went down the road towards her lodging, saying to herself, "I don't believe he is the worst. At any rate I do not despair of him. He has a heart."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

* * *

THE PRIDE OF THE FAMILY.

It really was not entirely Fid's fault that he grew so proud, and looked down with such contempt upon his brother and sister, Bandy and Jess.

We don't mean that Fid was not to blame, but that he hadn't had quite a fair chance. His mother was always telling him that he was the finest pup she had ever had; while his young mistress, Violet Merrill, was so fond of him that she called him the pride of the family, and showed him so much indulgence that her Persian kitten was quite jealous, and lost no opportunity of giving the new pet a sly scratch when no one was looking.

Thus, flattered and caressed, Fid grew up sleek and handsome, but disobedient, lazy, and conceited, and lording it in fine style over his brother and sister. Jess was a merry, light-hearted little creature, and did not trouble herself very much about Fid's temper and tantrums; but Bandy (so called because of his bow-legs) was a grave, thoughtful, sensitive little dog, and took sadly to heart his handsome brother's unkind words and taunts.

Not that he ever defended himself against these, however, for he knew he was ugly and awkward and bandy; that his head was big and shapeless, and his body ungainly. So he did not resent the unkindness, keenly though he felt it; but he resolved to try and make up in character for what he lacked in person, proving himself in this a very wise little doggie.

It was no great sorrow to Bandy when he learned that he was to be sent away to a farmhouse some miles distant; in this new home, though he was not petted nor caressed much, he found kind friends, and discovered, moreover, that he was not such a poor useless wretch as he had thought himself, for there were several ways in which he was able to be of service, in all of which he tried earnestly to do his best.

It was a comfort to him that no one here seemed to notice his bandy legs or his ugly waddle, while his sweet temper, his readiness to obey, his gentleness with smaller and weaker things, and his great intelligence, endeared him to all.

Time went on, and with plenty of wholesome food and exercise in the open air, and no pampering to spoil his health, Bandy grew apace, till it was evident that he was going to be quite a large dog. His hair, too, became long and silky, almost hiding his bandy legs. His eyes had a loving, trusting look in them which made them beautiful, and his ears were glossy and drooping. And one day when he ran down to the brook to drink, he was startled to see, looking at him out of the tree-shadowed water, a handsome dog, as big as a retriever, and as silky as a spaniel.

With size and strength came courage too, and this showed itself very plainly on one occasion when the farmer set Bandy to guard his coat and a basket of provisions while he went further to look after his haymakers. For, while the farmer was gone, an evil-looking tramp came by, and coveting the coat and basket, he took up a sharp stone and threw it at Bandy to make him quit his charge.

The stone hit the dog on one of his paws which rested on the coat, but Bandy never stirred. Then the tramp brandished his stick and came nearer, but Bandy did not move, only growled ominously and bristled all over. Then, seeing that the tramp still remained, and seemed to be meditating a fresh attack, the faithful guardian set up a tremendous barking, and his master hearing him, knew that something must be wrong, and coming up, soon sent the tramp about his business.

"My poor brave dog!" said he, as he bathed and bound up his trusty servant's wounded foot. "May I be as faithful to my master, as you are to yours!" And though Bandy did not understand all of this so well as you do, dear readers, he knew it was something very sweet and kind, and licked the farmer's hand gratefully by way of thanks.

The months passed swiftly, and one day Violet Merrill drove over to the farm in the pony chaise to see the farmer's wife who had been her nurse; and beside her on the seat sat handsome Fid, as proud as ever.

"But what dog is *this*?" cried Violet, as Bandy bounded up to her, and gave her a joyful welcome.

"That dog, Miss," replied the farmer, smiling, "is Bandy, the pup you sent me; and ——," he added, stooping to caress the dog—"he's just the knowingest, faithfullest, kindest crittur that ever did his master's biddin' on four legs; and that's the truth!"

Violet was charmed to see Bandy again, and asked if she might take him with her for a ramble in the fields, to which the farmer gave a ready consent, only cautioning her not to go into a certain meadow where a bull was grazing.

So off went Violet with the two dogs, Bandy bounding along in front, and Fid keeping sullenly to heel; but at last the unaccustomed freedom and freshness inspired even his lethargic body with animation, and he began to run and caper wildly, much to the amusement of his little mistress. But her amusement was turned to terror, when at last he scrambled under a stile, and set off across the field where the tawny old bull was grazing.

"Fid, Fid, come back," screamed Violet; but Fid did not heed her call.

Seeing her pet's danger, Violet jumped over the stile and ran after him, calling to him to return.

Of course, all this noise attracted the attention of the bull. Turning quickly, the great

The Pride of the Family.

beast caught sight of Fid, who was not far from him, and lowering his fierce head he made one great rush, caught the dog up on his horns, and tossed him into a high, thick bramble hedge, which bounded the field on one side. Then he stood still, roaring and pawing the ground, and at that moment he spied Violet, who, in her horror at her favourite's sudden flight up into the air, had not thought of her own danger. The bright, fluttering, summer garments of the child arrested the eye of the bull, and with his tail in the air on he came at a wild gallop, while Violet turned towards the stile, her feet winged with terror. But she had not yet gained it when the furious creature overtook her.

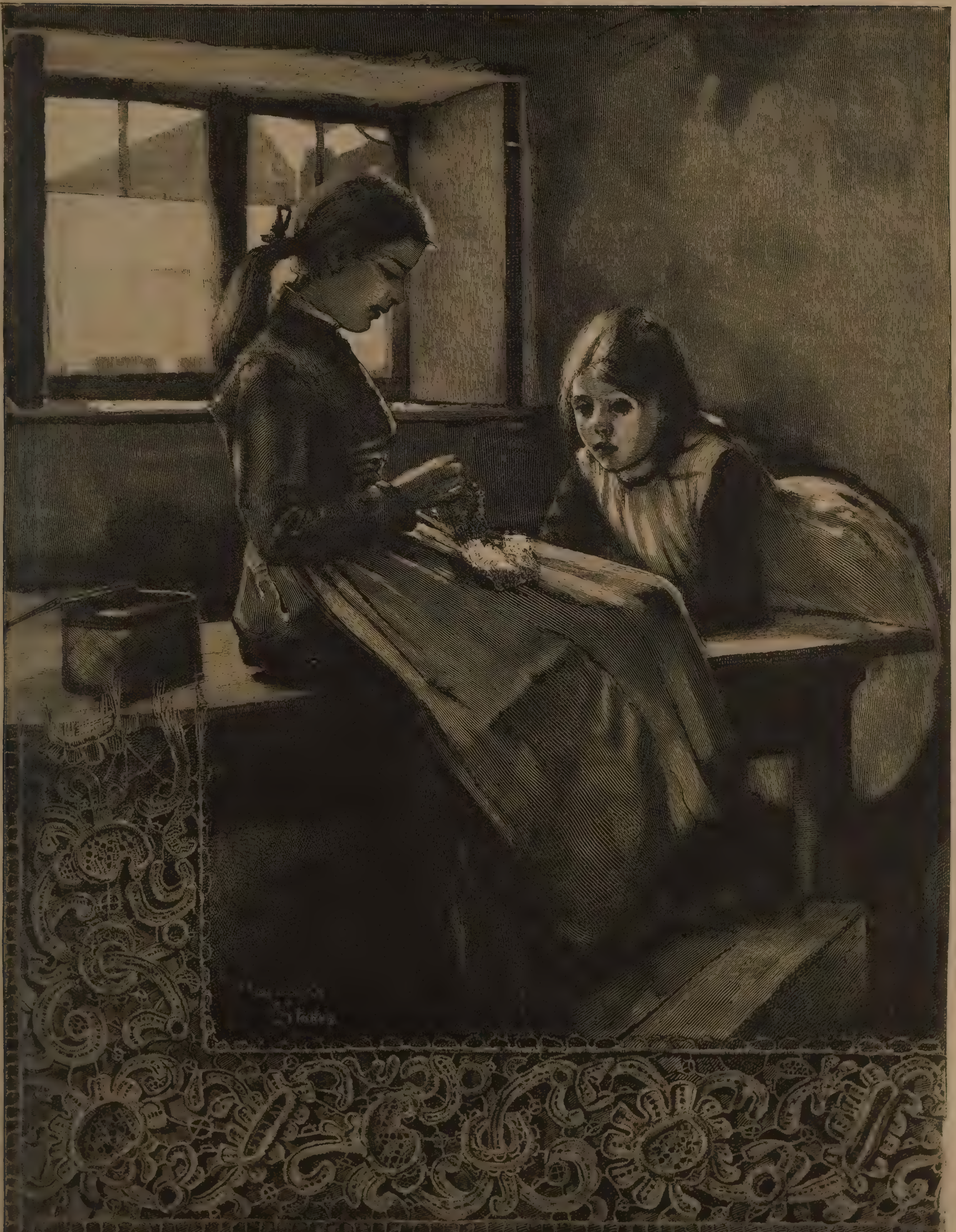
Another moment and the little girl must have been tossed like Fid, but just then Bandy sprang boldly forward, leaped right up in the bull's face, and bit him sharply on the nose. This, of course, diverted the animal's attention, and he chased his new enemy to the other end of the field.

Then, as Bandy saw that Violet had made good her escape, he ran back across the meadow, easily avoiding the horns of the bull, and squeezing through a gap in the hedge, rejoined the child, who then proceeded to look after poor Fid. They found him still in the bramble hedge, but so high up that Violet could not reach him, so there was nothing to do but to return to the farm for assistance.

Fid was a good deal hurt, though not dangerously. One of his legs was broken, his smooth coat ragged and torn, and an ear was badly slit. He recovered in time, but was never the same dog again, nor could he any more be called the pride of the family. As for Bandy, Violet could not say enough in his praise for having saved her from the bull, and she begged so hard to take him home with her, that the farmer agreed to let him go, while he kept Fid at the farm to be doctored.

We cannot follow Bandy to his old, new home, or relate his experiences there; but, perhaps, we have told you enough about both him and Fid, to show that the best things are not always wrapped up in the prettiest parcels, and that to be the *pride* of the family may not mean to be its greatest *blessing*.

M. E. B.



From the Painting] IRISH LACE MAKERS. [by Marianne Stokes

LACE-MAKING IN IRELAND.

In spite of the poverty of Irish cottage homes it is pleasant indeed to find one where the girls are making lace, the beauty of which they have learnt to appreciate. Some such there are in the beautiful valley of the Blackwater. In hard times money thus earned goes far to the support of whole families.

A school was started at Cappoquin—a rough little town in County Waterford—by Sir Richard Keane, its owner, and Miss Keane, about fifteen years ago, where girls were taught to make copies of old Italian laces. It was hoped that besides teaching a trade this would have a civilising influence, and no doubt it has. One of the great difficulties has been that as fast as girls became efficient workers emigration took them off. Many, however, have sent back from America for patterns.

The school was allowed to decline until two years ago, since when there have been as many as thirty pupils. It is hoped in time to have a comfortable work-room for them. Hitherto they have worked in their own cottages. Lately they made a fan, which was presented to Princess Beatrice by the ladies of the county. Lace-making in Ireland has had a variable history. The industry has from time to time flourished under the patronage of the great and fashionable, or when poverty and distress have driven the poor to it; but it has declined again when incentives to work have been removed.

We have no records by which to fix the period when lace was first made in Ireland; but we read that great encouragement was given the industry towards the middle of the eighteenth century by a club of Irish patriots, called the Dublin Society. Acting under the advice of Lady Arabella Denny, money prizes were given by this Society for the best reproductions of Brussels lace, Dresden point, and bone lace, as pillow lace was then called.

At this time there was a strong national feeling in Ireland, and patriotism was extended even to lace; and we are told that enthusiastic young Irishmen, anxious to stimulate home manufactures, refused to toast any lady or to consider her beautiful if she wore French laces or foreign fopperies. Ladies, on their part, exerted themselves to found schools, and to have children taught the art of making lace.

Gold and silver lace was at this time so well made in Ireland, that in 1778 the Irish Parliament passed an Act forbidding the importation of such manufactures from England or any foreign port.

But troublous times came upon Ireland. The Dublin Society ceased to exist. Lady Arabella Denny died in 1792 at the age of eighty five, and the lace industry of Ireland languished for the lack of support and encouragement until the early part of the present century.

The severe distress of repeated potato famines, and the terrible suffering, the starvation, and death caused by the great famine of 1846-7, induced many ladies, whose hearts were deeply stirred by the misery around them, to make serious efforts to revive the Irish lace industry, and to try and find in it the means of support for a starving people.

The Limerick lace industry owed its origin to an Englishman, Mr. Charles Walker, who, on marrying the daughter of a lace manufacturer, determined to try and make a commercial success of an industry which had at that time a most feeble existence. He brought over twenty-four girls from England as teachers, and in a short time a large amount of good lace was being made in Ireland.

During the famine lace-making was one of the great resources of the district; and through an association of ladies, who worked hard to help the poor in their distress, a considerable sale was obtained for Limerick lace. This was the time when the lace fichus, berthas, ruffles, and frills were much worn by ladies, both young and old. The lace made at this period was very fine, good in design, and delicate in execution.

After the famine, when death and emigration had greatly diminished the population of Ireland, and the desperate need of an agricultural population to make some extra earnings, however small, had passed away, the Limerick lace industry declined.

Public interest in it was lost, good designs were no longer supplied to the workers, Limerick fell out of fashion, and till a few years ago only the coarsest kinds of the poorest designs were made, and sold at very low prices. This pretty old lace was in this degraded condition when it was taken in hand, five or six years ago, by Mrs. Vere O'Brien, the adopted daughter of the late W. E. Forster, Chief Secretary for Ireland.

This lady, on marrying an Irish gentleman, and settling near Limerick, opened a school, at which to teach again the making of the charming old lace of the district. Under this kind and wise influence the industry has revived, and at Mrs. Vere O'Brien's school are now produced the most beautiful laces, which are both fine in execution and artistic in design.

Irish point lace owes its origin to the earnestness and ingenuity of a nun in the convent at Youghal, who was anxious—as all good nuns of Ireland always have been, and still are—to find industrial employment for the children of her schools. Chancing to come across an old piece of Italian point, she unpicked it, studied the stitches of which it was composed, and reproduced them with success.

She then determined to teach some of the poor children who were in need of bread to learn and make point lace as a means of livelihood. She succeeded so well that the first specimens of Irish point were sold at a high price. New point stitches were invented and designs were improved, and in a short time Irish point became, owing to the devotion of this kindly nun to her poor children, an established success.

It is now made in many convent schools; but that made at Kenmare, Kinsale, and Youghal is the best. American ladies greatly admire this lace, and when passing through Ireland, on their way to Europe, they frequently give large orders for it at the convents.

Youghal point also fell into a low condition owing to the poor designs and coarse thread used; but of late years the Lace Committee at South Kensington, and the School of Design at Cork, have encouraged the production of good lace designs, and aided the workers and teachers to obtain them; and Youghal point has again taken its position as one of the finest laces made.

Away in that wild and desolate county, Donegal, in the midst of Lough Erne, there is an island called Innishmacsaint, to which the poor peasants of the district often come on pilgrimage. Extremely poor the peasants of Donegal always are, but in 1846 their condition was desperate. An old piece of Italian point lace excited the attention of Mrs. Maclean, the wife of the rector of the parish of Tynan, exactly as a similar relic had attracted the nun at the convent of Youghal.

The old piece of lace awoke in each lady similar trains of thought, and induced each to make the same effort to help the starving children about her. This old piece of point was unpicked, and the stitches of which it was composed discovered, and Mrs. Maclean began to teach the making of rose point to the girls of her parish. Private orders sustained the school, and the earnings made were a great boon to the people.

While the unhappy country lay prostrated by the scourge, various ladies exerted themselves to form classes for teaching crochet, to keep up and improve the standard and quality of the work. Every girl taught was obliged to teach three more, and she could not get employment till she gave evidence that three girls had been taught by her to do good work. In this way the spirit of Christian helpfulness spread, and thousands of girls were soon employed earning money to support their families, and to save them from starvation.

Irish crochet laces, for which sympathy with suffering created so great a demand, fell, unfortunately, out of fashion, and a ruining trade competition, and the demand for cheapness, so lowered wages and the quality of the once beautiful work, that the industry almost died out. Mr. Biddle has of late years done much to revive it, and has supplied the Irish workers with beautiful designs. He has also introduced a splendid crochet lace in lustrous silk, both black and white.

These new Irish laces, as well as the Limerick and Carrickmacross, excited the greatest admiration, even from the judges and lacemakers of Belgium and France, at the great Exhibition at Paris in 1889, and were awarded the silver medal. The Queen, in order to patronise Irish lace, recently wore a quantity of black silk Irish crochet at one of the Drawing Rooms, since when this lace has been called Royal.

An effort is now being made to introduce the pillow and plaited laces into Ireland, and a school has recently been opened by Mrs. Ernest Hart for that purpose in Gweedore, Co. Donegal. The industry is still small, though a number of girls now make excellent lace.

The story of the lace industries of Ireland illustrates in a striking manner what valuable services women can render who care for the poor, and who are anxious to serve others. Women have been in Ireland the very mothers of industry. What has been begun by them out of Christian love for a suffering people has been taken up by traders, and has been made by them a great commercial success. Competition has frequently lowered the quality of the work and the earnings of the workers, but the lace industries of Ireland now seem to have a prosperous time before them.

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CANDLES AND SOAP.

It would be interesting to trace the history of candles from the time of King Alfred to Queen Victoria, but time and space forbid, and we must leave reflections on the past, bring our minds to the present, and with a slight effort of imagination, find ourselves entering one of the large candle factories.

Behold, then, numerous barrels of the raw material lying ready for use; the raw material in this case being various kinds of animal fat, which arrive dirty and mixed with skin, and are to issue forth by-and-bye white as snow.

The limit of our paper will not allow us to trace fully the operations by which this is brought about in every different kind of candle, but we will give a brief outline of the process generally, and then a more detailed account of that one in particular to which we are indebted for sperm candles and glycerine. First, then, as to the ordinary means of candle-making.

The fat is pumped up from the vats into long bags, very much resembling those wind instruments from which wandering Savoyards extract unearthly sounds. In passing through these receptacles the hard fat remains behind, the soft flows out into bags of a different shape, flat and square.

These are pressed by means of a hydraulic pump between plates of iron, arranged very much after the fashion of a galvanic battery. This press is cold, but the same operation is next performed in one heated by steam, thus extracting more oil.

When this is over, the fat is turned out into large casks, and looks for all the world like a mass of honeycomb until you come quite close to it.

All the different fats meet in the mixing-room, where they are treated according to the quality and kind of candles into which they are to be converted. Having given this brief sketch, we will leave the fat in the barrels ready for use, and trace particularly the manufacture of sperm or palmitine candles.

The palm tree is, as every one knows, a native of Africa. So abundantly does it grow there that the supply of oil from it seems to be almost unlimited.

Standing in the factory we looked upon hundreds of barrels of this strange product. It is of a deep orange colour, soft, and thick, and seemed to our uninitiated eyes as likely to develope into hard snow-white candles as a negro would be to change into an Englishman.

These barrels of palm oil are run over large tanks, and by the judicious application of steam to the bung-hole, out flows the oil. It is then pumped up into receptacles overhead to settle. Poor thing, it needs a little time to gather up its strength for the ordeal which lies before it.

You must know, reader, that all grease consists of molecules of fat surrounded by membrane, to put it scientifically. Well, the fat has to be freed from the superfluous matter, and it can be done in two ways, either by boiling it down into soap first or by subjecting it to the influence of acid.

The latter process is generally preferred, as being more prompt and effectual. Accordingly, the palm oil is put into a large tank, heated to 300 degrees Fahrenheit, and mixed with a certain percentage of sulphuric acid.

The acid decomposes or breaks up the fat; all that is not wanted remains behind in the tank, and the good fat runs off into a large vat.

But the fat is no longer alone, the action of the acid has done more than take away the bad qualities; it has produced a new substance. With the liquid fat runs off a sweet water which we all know as glycerine. The next thing to be done is to separate these two friends, and for this purpose they are boiled several times with steam water, until finally the glycerine is entirely eliminated and runs into a large still or copper pot. This pot is raised to the prodigious heat of 700 degrees by means of a fire below and superheated steam. The steam is superheated by being led through pipes which run actually through a fire.

The glycerine is driven out through perpendicular pipes, one end of which is immersed in cold water, thereby condensing the glycerine as it works its way to a tap, and drips out into cans.

We examined it carefully at this stage, and found it *yellow*, utterly unlike the liquid we so often apply to our hands; but this was not the only imperfection—it was also quite thin. How were these two faults to be corrected? The gravity of water, as our readers will know, is 1,000, that of glycerine ought to be 1,260, so the liquid is taken from the cans into a vacuum, where it is concentrated again and made thicker; thence into another still, where the same process is gone through as was described above. By this time the required gravity has been attained, but the liquid is still yellow.

It is now led into jacket-pans, and stirred up with ivory black.

It may be as well to explain that these jacket-pans, of which we generally see some in every factory, are so called because they are enclosed in a coat of steam, as it were, thus making the heat equal all over.

After a certain amount of mixing, the ivory black is allowed to settle, and the glycerine is skimmed off the top. It is then distilled again several times, till it finally runs off clear, thick, and sweet as we know it.

But we must go back now and follow the fate of the fat after it had been separated from the sweet water. It is led into stills, too, and treated in exactly the same way as glycerine, the change made in it being, if anything, more wonderful. It enters the still a dark brown, and issues forth a pure white, having left behind it in the still a black compound commonly known as pitch. From the stills it passes into bags, is pressed by the hydraulic pump, and is then ready for use.

We saw five bottles whose contents interested us so much that we cannot resist describing them to our readers.

No. 1. Contained palm oil, pure and simple, of a deep orange colour.

No. 2. The same after being treated with acid—a dark brown.

No. 3. The deposit left in the still—pitch.

No. 4. The fat after being distilled—pure white.

No. 5. The fat, stearine or sperm, ready for use.

Passing through the mixing-room we were led into the candle-room. Here, again, we must give the making of one kind as a specimen of all, the process of making all mould candles being exactly the same, however much the quality or size may vary.

Figure to yourself a large iron box with several pipes running through it, which pipes are the moulds for the candles. Into these pipes are led (from underneath) as many different wicks, which are wound on bobbins close at hand.

When a man wants to mould some candles he first turns on a tap which circulates hot water round the pipes; he then pours in the liquid fat. The hot water is drawn off and cold turned on; in twenty minutes the grease is cold. [TO BE CONTINUED.]

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CARELESS CHARLOTTE.

"Charlotte! Charlotte!" cried Mrs. Hopper, "I've got a chance to go to Leicester; can I trust you with the baking, and to wash those few things, and to look after little Johnny?"

"Oh yes, ma'am," said Charlotte, a good-tempered girl, "I'll do it all."

"Yes, but how will you do it?" said Mrs. Hopper. "I wouldn't go if it wasn't for buying the pig, but I know where there's one that will suit me, and don't want to lose it. Now mind, you put just *so* much salt as this in the bread, not one bit more or the master won't eat it; and don't forget the things. I shall want to send them by the carrier to-morrow, and, whatever you do, don't let Johnny go near the cellar steps."

Charlotte eagerly promised all, and took the little cup in her hand which her mistress had given her to measure the salt with.

Directly Mrs. Hopper was gone she went out to look after Johnny, who was very happy playing at the barn door. He wouldn't come, and she was afraid of leaving him lest he should get into mischief. To entice him she held up the little cup, and told him to come for it—upon which he got up and ran to her, and she allowed him to take it, thinking she could easily have it back when she had him safe in the kitchen.

For a while Charlotte remembered what she had to do; but whilst sweeping the hall her eye was caught by an old book with clasps, and opening it she forgot all about her dusting in looking at the old-fashioned pictures. At last she went to work to prepare the bread, and, without thinking of what her mistress had said, threw in a great deal of salt; nor did she remember that any particular quantity had been ordered till she heard a smash on the kitchen bricks, Master Johnny having thrown the cup at the cat, and broken it to pieces.

"Oh, well, what does it signify?" she said. "A bit of salt can't make any difference," but she scolded Johnny and put him in the corner. She had some trouble to keep him there while she got the dinner and washed the things in the bag—the latter job she did so hurriedly that she knew she should have to go through them again. "Never mind," she thought, "there'll be plenty of time to get them up before the carrier goes."

Just as she had put away the tub and begun to clean up the kitchen, a woman came to the door with needles and tapes; she soon found out that the mistress was away.

"Cross my hand," she said, "with a piece of silver, and I'll tell you your fortune."

"Eh!" said Charlotte. "I haven't got a bit of silver of my own."

"Couldn't you find a thimble of the missus'?" said the woman.

"Oh, but I dursn't take hers," said Charlotte.

"It won't do a bit of harm to cross my hand with it, you know," said the woman, "and I don't care for money as you haven't got any, you can give me a bit of broken victuals, something she won't miss."

Charlotte fetched the thimble, and charging little Johnny, who had nearly cried himself to sleep, to stop in the kitchen, went off again to the woman. Many fine promises did the wicked deceiver make, and she was in the very act of telling her the colour of the gown she was to be married in when a loud scream startled Charlotte, who rushed into the house, and, finding the kitchen empty, followed the cry to the top of the cellar steps, at the bottom of which lay little Johnny, his face covered with blood.

Happily, no bones were broken, though of scratches and bruises he had plenty. The fortune-teller was gone when she brought him up, and she was glad of it, for all her thought was now to make the child quiet, and take away, as far as she could, the marks on his face.

By dint of coaxing he was soon quieted, but when Mrs. Hopper came home she wrathfully called out, "I do believe, for all the charge I gave you, he's been down the cellar steps!"

It was in vain for Charlotte to declare she couldn't help it, she knew very well that if she hadn't been out with the gipsy it would not have happened, so she was obliged to bear the scolding in silence. The bread came home and looked very light, and Charlotte hoped her troubles were over; but the next morning her mistress called, "Bring me those things, Charlotte, I shall just have time to rub them over before the carrier comes; the irons are ready, and Mary expects them to-day."

Charlotte trembled all over; in the fuss about Johnny she had quite forgotten to wash them over again the evening before, and now she mumbled something about not quite dry.

"Not quite dry?" said her mistress; "let me see how dry they are"; and she followed her to fetch them, and found them still in soak.

What was the use of her saying that she had meant to wash them again? Mrs. Hopper would hear nothing; she was too much taken up with what she saw, and Charlotte heard the truth of herself in no very gentle terms. Among other things Mrs. Hopper said she had brought her a pink handkerchief from Leicester, hoping to find she deserved it; but she needn't expect it now.

It was a gloomy morning—Charlotte thought it would never go; but towards evening Mrs. Hopper, seeing how sorry she looked, spoke kindly to her, and told her to bring her cotton box and come and sit down to work.

She quite forgot her dusting.

"Well, it's very odd," said Mrs. Hopper, hunting about in her blue check workbag, "I'm sure I left my thimble in this bag. Charlotte, go and see if it's in the pocket of my other gown, not that I ever leave it there."

Poor Charlotte! A dreadful feeling came over her as she went upstairs; she put her hand in the pocket, but she knew very well the thimble wasn't there. How could she have been so foolish as to let that woman have it? She went downstairs, not having courage to tell the truth, but only saying she couldn't find it.

Mrs. Hopper kept up a low grumble all the evening about her thimble; it had been her mother's, and she wouldn't have lost it for a guinea. Charlotte thought if she had a guinea then she would willingly give it to have it back in the little check bag.

"Fetch me some of the new bread," said Mr. Hopper, at supper that night. "I don't feel quite well, and want something tempting."

Charlotte ran gladly to fetch the loaf, for it looked so light; she hoped to get some praise for it.

"What do you call this?" said Mr. Hopper, after he had eaten a mouthful or two. "Why this is as salt as salt!"

"Too salt!" said Mrs. Hopper; "why there was only the same quantity in"; and she looked at Charlotte.

"I tell you there's as much salt as flour pretty nearly," said the farmer, "and those that made it had better eat it. I'll have none of it; you know how bad it makes me, and I wonder at you."

"How much salt did you put in?" asked Mrs. Hopper.

"Not much," said Charlotte.

"Did you put in what I told you?"

"I didn't think it would make much difference," said Charlotte. "Johnny broke the cup, so I couldn't measure it."

Mrs. Hopper was in the middle of a storm of scolding for letting Johnny have the cup, and for all her carelessness, when the mistress of the next farmhouse came in. Glad enough Charlotte was to see her, not knowing her errand.

"Oh, I want you," said Mrs. White. "Don't go away, Charlotte. I caught a gipsy at our door yesterday evening. I overheard her offering to sell this thimble to our Betsy for a bottle of beer and sixpence, and I got my son to go out to her, and frighten her, and he made her give the thimble up; he said he was sure it was stolen, and threatened her with the police, and she was glad enough to get away. When I came to look at it I thought it was yours, it had got the same curious broad rim."

"Well to be sure! What do you say to this?" said Mrs. Hopper, turning to Charlotte. "No wonder that the poor child was left to go down the cellar steps; no wonder the bread was spoilt; no wonder you forgot to wash the clothes, if that's the way you spent your time, giving my property to fortune-tellers."

It was a sad business—Charlotte lost her place, and Mrs. Hopper looked very grave, and coughed several times in giving her a character, so that she very nearly failed to get another.

"The girl is kindhearted and willing, ma'am, but so very thoughtless. Oh, she doesn't mind work, but then she can't be trusted."

Many a tear did that day's work cost Charlotte, then and afterwards; but she had reason to be glad in the end, for her trouble taught her to think, so that she became at last a good servant, had good places, and a character without a fault.

Mrs. Prosser.

NOT WASTED LIVES.

“ Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.”

Say not we waste our sweetness on the desert air,
Thou dost not know what we accomplish there;
There 's value in a small thing that 's done well;
Our mission may be greater than the world can tell.

There 's one dear Loving Eye that marks us here—
The eye of Him who made this lovely sphere;
And that He knows our beauty and our grace,
Is bliss to us in running our short race.

Perchance a wearied insect comes to find
Rest from the sun or from the scorching wind;
And if it gain refreshment in our shade,
Is not that something done before we fade?

Perchance in drawing moisture from the skies,
We have the mission wastes to fertilise;
“The desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose”—
Here 's a design for every flower that grows.

Say not some lives are wasted when unseen,
Thou know'st not what their influence has been;
The Saviour says, those who are famed on earth
Are not the ones His Father counts most worth.

Perchance some humble follower of His
Learnt first from them the way to heaven's bliss;
Perchance when called at length from earth to rest,
The fragrance of their lives will still be blest.

Be sure in either case they are not lost—
Be sure, if we could know and count the cost
Of the unseen and seen, we should beware
Of saying they were wasted on the desert air.

E. S. A.

“ Your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory ” (*Col.* 3. 3, 4).

WHOSOEVER WILL, COME.

THUS the Word of God closes. Reader, whoever you may be, whatever you may be, come to Jesus.

Are you young? Come to Jesus while the bloom of youth is on you. He loves to see young people come. Hear His own sweet words, "I love them that love Me, and they that seek Me early shall find Me." Others *may* find Him, for His grace is sovereign; they *shall* find Him, for His word is pledged.

Come, then, before sin hardens you, before the world captivates you, before Satan deceives you. Come, and let Jesus have the first and best of your days.

Are you in middle life? Come to Jesus, delay not, for a hardening process is going on. Your conscience will become seared. Your affections will be riveted to earth, and custom will render it almost impossible for you to come. Hence says the prophet, "Let the Ethiopian change his skin, and the leopard his spots, then may they also do good who are accustomed to do evil."

Are you aged? What! an old sinner? The head white with age, and the heart black with sin. Awful sight! Yet, old as you are, you may come to Jesus. He has not excluded even those who have given the devil and the world the best of their days.

But you must come at once. Your sun is going down. Your opportunities are few. *It is the eleventh hour, and every minute tells now.* The hand on the dial-plate will soon move round to twelve, and then all is over.

As death finds you it will leave you. Will it find you unpardoned, unsanctified, unsaved? Will it? Oh, come, come to Jesus! Come this moment. Fall on your knees, cry for mercy, nor cease crying until Jesus saith to thee, "Thy sins are forgiven thee: go in peace."

DORCAS.

"This woman was full of good works and alms-deeds, which she *did.*"—*Acts* 9. 36.

IT is here that the character of Dorcas (the woman spoken of in the above passage) appears to the best advantage as a Christian. She was "full of good works and alms-deeds, which she *did.*" She had not a mere reputation for benevolence, but she actually *did* something for the needy. She worked with her own hands for them.

We read of the "coats and garments which Dorcas *made.*" She did not get them made, but she made them herself. Perhaps some rich ladies gave her money to buy the cloth, and that was a *gift* to the Lord, and a good one too; but Dorcas made them, and that was a *deed.* Many have only *gifts* to present to God, while the few have *deeds* to offer.

Dorcas *did* the work. She went out into the by-ways and lanes of the city, to find the needy, and clothe them with the garments she had made. The poor might have fared severely without these self-denying labours of Dorcas; for the rich women would not have soiled their costly garments by threading the dirty lanes on errands of mercy.

If some one, who had *deeds* instead of *gifts* for God, had interest enough to solicit their aid, it was well; otherwise the poor might have lacked food and clothing.

It is proper to make this distinction between *gifts* for the Lord and *deeds*, and to consider the self-denial there is in each. We shall thereby learn that many who have no money to bestow upon objects of charity may do what is equally and, in some circumstances, more acceptable—perform *deeds* for Christ.

The poorest can thus serve God; for, if they have nothing to *give*, they have strength and opportunity to *do.* In the great day of account we think that some will be known by the Judge for what they *gave*, and others for what they *did.*

A SABBATH MORN IN SPRING.

SWEET is the Sabbath morn to me,
From worldly care and duty free,
Earnest of that long resting day
When this short life hath passed away.

I hear the cuckoo's welcome voice,
It makes my gladdened heart rejoice;
I hear the lark, ascending high,
Warble its Sabbath melody.

I hear the village bells declare,
In sacred tones, the hour of prayer,
And enter where, by Jesus blest,
The weary spirit findeth rest.

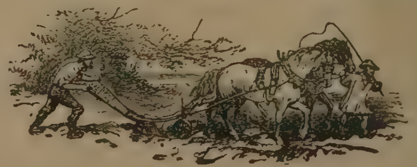
How dear the hallowed fane to me!
The very home of Deity,
For brightly beams within that shrine
The radiance of the light Divine.

The aged pastor's saintly grace,
The winsome beauty of his face,
His Christlike words, so rich in power,
Give pleasure to the worship-hour.

And old and young in concert raise
To God their heartfelt songs of praise,
Whose loving benediction given,
Makes Zion's courts the gate of heaven.

Sweet is the Sabbath morn to me,
From worldly care and duty free,
Earnest of that long resting-day,
When this short life hath passed away.

Julius Brigg.



UNBELIEF.

Though *some* believed, yet, as a body, neither the Jewish rulers nor the people believed on Him. They saw His miracles, and yet did not believe.

But this was exactly what Isaiah had foretold, hundreds of years before: "Lord, who hath believed our report?" And the secret reason of their unbelief is told us in another part of the same prophecy: a hard and unbelieving heart was God's *judgment* upon them for sin. They had been long unbelieving, rebellious, and impenitent; therefore the gift of faith was *withheld* from them. The prophecy was fulfilled in the case of the Jewish nation in our Lord's time.

This is a solemn warning. They who *now* harden themselves against God, and remain careless and impenitent—what if God should punish them by hardening their hearts yet more, so that His word should never again touch their conscience?

Christ was not then come to judge, but to save; yet those who rejected Him, and did not receive His words, did expose themselves to an awful judgment for that very sin. They had heard His word, but not believed: that very word should rise up against them at the great day, and condemn them.

There is no difference here between us and them. Those among us who hear but do not believe will likewise be judged for their unbelief. We are responsible for our hearing of the word. We are bound to believe God's message. If any believe it not, they are verily guilty before Him. The word that they hear, but hear without truly believing on Him of whom the word testifies, that word will condemn them.

Observe, that our Lord speaks of *rejecting* Him, and of *not receiving His words*, as one thing, one act of unbelief, one cause of condemnation. This makes the careless and thoughtless to be nothing short of *rejecters* of Christ. No one can be neutral here. They who do not receive Him do *reject* Him.

All that He said, He said from the Father. It is the Lord God Almighty who speaks here. "His commandment is life everlasting;" and *this* is His commandment, that we should believe on His Son Jesus Christ. It is He that invites and warns us here and elsewhere, by the lips of His blessed Son, and in all His inspired Word. May the Holy Spirit bring home the word to our hearts!

Rev. F. Bourdillon.

FORGOTTEN WORDS.

Among the books that will be opened when God shall reckon with the universe, one will be produced filled with costlier records than the common transactions of time.

In that precious volume—that "book of remembrance, written before Him for those that feared the Lord and thought upon His name"—how many little acts of the humblest saint, which the world never knew or noticed, will appear in golden capitals!

How many forgotten words and looks of kindness, which dropped a healing balm into some broken heart, will then be shown unto the child of God, who fain will ask, "When did I this?"

How brightly, in those leaves of pearl, will glow that pellucid jewel which fell from the eye of him who gave all he had—a tear—for another's woe!

And the poor widow's mite, what a bright record shall be made of that, and of the midnight prayer she made for those pinched with sterner wants than hers! What a page in that heavenly album will be given to him who gave a cup of cold water to a disciple of the Lamb, with a heart big enough to have given the world!

There will be shown prison scenes, and sick and death-bed scenes, where eyes with a heaven full of love in them, and hearts big with the immortal sympathy of God, ministered to the sick stranger, and to him who was ready to perish. In that souvenir of eternity will be preserved charities of celestial water that never found a record or remembrance on earth.

E. Burritt.

A PIOUS KING.

We can gather many practical lessons for our every day life from the histories of the kings of olden time.

If we read 2 Chronicles 17 we shall see that Jehoshaphat was a pious king. "He sought to the Lord God of his fathers and walked in His commandments." He cared for the souls of his people, and made special efforts that they might be instructed in the Word of God.

This is a bright page in the history of Jehoshaphat; but the next chapter tells us how he was led astray by his friendship with the King of Israel. "Now Jehoshaphat had riches and

Jehoshaphat praying in the House of the Lord.

honour in abundance, and joined affinity with Ahab;" that is, he married his son Jehoram to Ahab's daughter Athaliah.

Then after a time Jehoshaphat paid Ahab a visit, and they became great friends. Why was this wrong? Ahab was a very ungodly man, "he did evil in the sight of the Lord, and he did more to provoke the God of Israel to anger than all that were before him." Jehoshaphat should not have made a friend of such a man.

Can we not learn a lesson here? Like Jehoshaphat, some of us have been led to know the Lord, and to walk in His ways. It is easy to make a profession of religion in these days, but it is not easy to be a Christian *at all times and in everything.*

It is not easy to go against the wishes of worldly companions, and to take our stand on the Lord's side. It is not easy to speak and act as a Christian in the work-room, or in the kitchen, or in the schoolroom. It is not easy to set our faces against trickery in business, or finery in dress, or foolish talking.

At the beginning of the Christian life, when we know very little of the evil of our hearts and of our utter helplessness, we think we can associate with worldly companions without any danger of being drawn aside; but we must all learn by experience that we are utterly unable to stand of ourselves, and that unless constantly upheld by God's power we shall surely fall.

Look at the two kings together, and see how the evil influence of Ahab overpowers Jehoshaphat. It could scarcely be otherwise, for Jehoshaphat had entered into this friendship contrary to God's will; it nearly cost him his life, and he was solemnly reproved for it by God. It is sad to see how Jehoshaphat fell again into the same snare of forming worldly friendships.

We need much wisdom and grace to be kept in our intercourse with others; "let us walk circumspectly towards them that are without;" that is, towards those who are still unconverted. Let us watch over our thoughts, and words, and actions in all our dealings with others. Our hearts are very treacherous, and are easily drawn aside. Let us never form any friendship without asking God that it may be for His glory.

Jehoshaphat had wandered from God, but when trouble came upon him he prayed to Him for help. If we are led astray, if we fall into sin, let us not keep away from God—keeping away from Him will only make matters worse; but let us remember God's own promise,—

"If we confess our sin, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sin, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Any wandering from God will make it difficult to pray; but let us go to Him as to a loving Father and tell Him all. *Louisa Clayton.*

Forging the Heavy Machinery of an Orient Liner.

ENGLAND'S IRON INDUSTRY.

Two important circumstances help to make England the chief manufacturing country of the world. The first is the abundance of coal and iron of good quality; the second, the fact that these valuable minerals are found *together*, thereby enabling the iron to be worked at a much cheaper rate than would otherwise be possible.

A visit to an iron mine is most interesting, helping us to realise the way in which thousands of our fellow-countrymen earn their living. The late Richard Rowe gives the following account of his visit to one of the pits at Merthyr Tydvil, the chief centre of the South Wales field:—

"The engine-man arranges for the banksman to show me round, and invites me into the engine-room, to get ready for my underground journey. When I have tied a handkerchief round my head, and plastered the engineer's Jim Crow down upon it, buttoned myself into his greasy monkey-jacket, and tucked my trousers into my boots, he tells me with a chuckle that my wife wouldn't know me now.

My guide is a short, civil fellow, with a bronzed ruddy face like a sailor's. We step on to a kind of cage, open at two sides; the wheels begin to revolve, slowly at first, more rapidly soon, and in less than half a minute we have dropped to the bottom of the downcast. The walls of the shaft drip on us as we go down, and when the cage grounds there is a splash of water as if we had been lowered into a well. We are two hundred feet nearer the centre of the earth than we were twenty-five seconds before.

It is a very miry, murky cellar we have got down into, however. We sink almost up to the calves in mud, and were it not for the banksman's lamp, when we have moved a few feet from the bottom of the shaft we should be in total darkness. A shout comes out of it, and we have to squeeze ourselves against the rough side of a low vault, to make room for a horse that stumbles by, drawing a laden truck.

The mine slopes, until we are between three and four hundred yards beneath the surface, and have colliers working in another pit above our heads. In the heading, or main thoroughfare, the walking is very slushy, and unseen waters gurgle by with an eerie sound; but the 'stalls' are dry enough. A long back here, however, must crook itself into a sickle, and the foothold is loose shingle.

We go into the fireman's lodge, a gloomy little cave, with safety-lamps hung against the wall, and a pale lean man rubbing away at one of them in silence, like a magician in a nursery legend. The great chain on the great winch that rumbles round as laden trucks run down, and empty trucks rush up a steep incline, looms through the dusk like a boa coiled round a fallen tree trunk.

We hear a stamping of feet and a champing of fodder; 'Wo-ho!' cries the banksman; and we grope our way past the heels of half-a-dozen cart-horses, that never see sunlight, eating their dreary dinner in utter darkness. We mount to daylight again after calling our steam coachman's attention by three or four tugs at his cord check-string.

A stranger's first feeling, on being turned adrift in the Dowlais ironworks, is one of utter bewilderment. He hears a sighing roar like that of the ocean, a hiss of steam, a clank of iron, a whir of wheels; sulphurous smoke and a spray of grit choke his nostrils; he sees round keeps and angular bastions, with fire leaping from their summits and glowing at their bases; a forest of chimney-stalks; a jumble of mysterious buildings, of all shapes and sizes; a maze of muddy rails, mounds of coal and lime, piles of metal, timber, and white brick; an army of men, women, and children, whose diverse garments are turned into a uniform by their unvarying grime-facings. Wherever the dazed visitor seeks rest for the sole of his foot, a tram-horse trots right at him.

But presently he begins to understand the scene. Those huge round buildings at the head of the valley, with gaping caves of fire at the bottom, must be the blast-furnaces. Those arched-brick boilers, with regulators perking above them, slides like box-iron doors, and fussy puffs of steam, must have something to do in generating the blast. Those huge pipes, that cross the valley like tubular bridges for small trains, must convey it.

'This is Welsh-mine-Dowlais,' says an old fellow, pointing to a smoking heap, 'and yonder's Northampton. We mix the iron as if we was making a pudding.'

Just off the furnace-galleries old men sit in low hovels, watching their younger mates as they wheel their loads of furnace-fodder on to the clanking weighing-machine.

'Every charge that goes in is weighed,' says your old man. The flames leap up and roar like caged lions longing to get out as one man turns the wheel that lifts or lowers the beam that hangs over the furnace-mouth; and then, merely putting on a thick waistcoat to save his shirt, his fellow wheels his barrow load of fuel to the burning pit and tilts it in (whilst the red fire-tongues seem to lick right round him) as coolly as a railway porter trundling trunks to a luggage van.

It is a strange scene to see sparrows hopping about in, and a tidy woman and a clean-faced little girl coming along with 'father's dinner.'"

Our picture shows the inside of the Lancefield works, on the Clyde, and the forging of the heavy machinery of an "Orient liner." It is a grand scene, full of wild fantastic effects of light and shade. The whole yard is lighted by electricity, and numberless are the devices used in order to save time and labour. The ribs are riveted to the keel by machines moved by hydraulic power; electric drills may be seen at work; there are hydraulic capstans and hoists and derricks that can lift twenty tons.

THE MAID IS NOT DEAD.

Oh, say not she is dead!
Breathe not a word so dread!
Though still and cold the graceful form reclineth.
Forget the beauteous clay;
High in a purer day—
A more exalted sphere, the spirit shineth.

What though her budding spring
Has felt the withering
Of mortal blight and merciless decay!
What though her life's young morn
Has darkened in its dawn,
Ere she had tasted of the golden day!

A nobler, purer life,
With fadeless beauty rife,
Of deeper consciousness and richer bloom,
Has all its fulness showered
On her young soul, and dowered
Her being with a bliss which knows no gloom.

Ah! why so sadly grieve
That your beloved should leave
Its earthly dwelling for a palace fair?
Your loss to her has been
A boundless gain I ween,
And heaven is richer for the loss ye bear.

For now another gem
Glows in the diadem
Of Him who fills the place with glory-beams;
Another precious flower
Blooms in the blissful bower;
Another lamb feeds by the crystal streams.

Another minstrel flings
Music from sweet harp strings;
Another star illumes the spirit-land;
Another white-robed form
Basks in the radiance warm;
Another seraph joins the sister band.

Ah, weep! but not in woe;
Rather should joy-tears flow,
That your sweet child hath found a home so fair.
Let hope and faith be strong,
And ye will both, ere long,
In all her joy and all her glory share.

From "Lays of Lowly Life," by Ruth Wills.

NAT THE QUARRYMAN.

By Eglanton Thorne.

Author of "The Old Worcester Jug," "Nathan Quilter's Fall," etc.

Chapter II.—Voices from the Past.

The face of Nat Youlton did not relapse into its usual sullen look as he strode on down the road. Miss Trotter was right; the man had a heart, and though he had done his utmost to harden it, that human heart of his, with its capacity for love, and hope, and happiness, would assert itself now and again.

He would never have owned that he liked children; but sometimes, when no one was near, he would stand still to watch the little ones at their play upon the sands, and occasionally he would do a kind turn for one or another of them, of which no one heard, for children have short memories, and are never overburdened with a sense of gratitude.

He sighed sometimes as he passed along the cliffs to his work at the slate quarries and heard the merry voices of children echoing from below. The sigh would perhaps be followed by a savage oath, for now that life had become a dreary, hateful thing to Nat, he could not bear to be reminded of the days when he was a happy, careless boy. For the memory of his boyhood was vivid still, though he was a man nearly forty years of age, and a very slight thing would recall it.

The heart within Nathaniel Youlton was so far sound and warm yet, that he was a happier man as he went on his way because he had saved a little child from injury and possibly from death. He did not tell himself that he was glad he had done what he had; but he met the clear, strong breeze, which blew from the sea, with a feeling of enjoyment, and looked at the broad expanse of ocean shimmering in the sun, and the long white breakers curling on the sands, with a sense that there was something good in the world after all.

Most small children would have screamed lustily on being held aloft in the grasp of a big, bearded stranger; but the little girl had smiled at Nat as he tossed her above his head. She had even laughed a ringing gleeful laugh.

He could see the pretty smiling face now with the yellow curls which half veiled the rosy cheeks. A faint smile crossed his own as he thought of it. Then the expression of his face hardened again. He set his teeth together with a muttered curse. Even that baby face touched chords of memory which jarred horribly.

Towards sunset, Nat again passed through the village street. His day's work was over, but this was not his way home. The little house in which Nat lived by himself was a lonely place more than a mile from the village.

Nat had come into Trevena to buy some tobacco. He had some idea that he should to go to the "Sportsman's Arms," a low public-house on the road to Boscastle, and spend the rest of the evening in drinking, and perhaps quarrelling, with the men who frequented its tap-room.

The parson had declared that Nat Youlton was not a drunkard, and it was true that he was never seen in a drunken condition. The love of strong drink had not yet taken a powerful hold on him. He drank rather for the sake of company and to pass away the time, or perhaps to deaden thought, than because he could not do without his glass.

But whatever the motives that drew him to the tap-room of the "Sportsman's Arms," it was a perilous place for him.

Nat was just passing the spot where in the morning he had snatched the little one from danger, when a babyish shout reached his ear, and, looking round, he saw the tiny girl standing within a garden on the left. It was a neatly kept cottage garden of the smallest dimensions, but as full of flowers as it could be.

The child smiled, and nodded her head vigorously when she had gained the man's attention. She was the picture of neatness now, her face shining from a liberal application of soap and water, her curls hanging in stiff, regular rows round her little head, whilst a spotless, highly-starched pinafore enveloped her tiny person.

She held in her hand a bright carnation, which she thrust through the palings towards him, saying,

"For 'ou, for 'ou. Pitty f'ower."

"Thank you," said Nat, taking the flower and gravely smelling it, to her great delight.

"What' am I to keep it? Oh, thank you! It *is* a beauty!" and again he sniffed at it.

"What is your name, little girl?" he asked, by way of continuing the conversation.

"Ma'wy," came from the rosy lips.

The sound startled the man. He had already been reminded of a little Mary of long ago. He moved as though to pass on. The next moment a tiny foot was thrust between the wooden palings.

"Loot! loot!" cried the pretty voice imperiously, "my new shoes."

"And very nice ones they are," said the big man, bending to look admiringly at the wee foot, and timidly clasping it with his fingers for a moment.

Just then a young woman appeared at the cottage door. She wore a clean print gown and snowy apron, and her hair was smooth and neatly braided at the back of her head; but what most struck Nat, as he glanced at her, was the extreme delicacy of her appearance.

Her face, which was oval in form, with refined and regular features, was of an almost marble whiteness, relieved only by a spot of bright colour in each cheek. Her eyes, of a clear, pure hazel hue, shone with a feverish brightness.

She knew Nat Youlton well by sight, and he recognised her as the widow of Jack Trewarne, who had been a mate of his at the quarries, but they had never yet exchanged words. Now, however, as she saw who it was talking to her little girl, Mrs. Trewarne's colour deepened, her eyes flashed, and she came quickly forward ere Nat could make his escape, as he would have liked to do.

"Stay, Nat Youlton," she cried, "I want to thank you. I *must* thank you, though I don't know how, for what you did this morning."

"I didn't do anything," returned Nat awkwardly, and he looked almost guilty in his embarrassment; "you 've nought to thank me for."

"Indeed, I know better," said the woman, and her tones trembled as she spoke. "Why, I met the parson as I was coming back from my work at Mrs. Thew's, and he told me how, but for you, my little Mary would have been knocked down and trampled by Brown's horses this morning."

"Oh, bless me!" exclaimed Nat, nearly slipping out an oath in his embarrassment, but an instinctive reverence for the woman checked it; "I did nothing to make a fuss about. Any man would have pulled the child away."

"I don't know about that. The parson said you was mighty quick. It just shows you 've a good heart, as my man always said."

"Did he say that?" asked Nat, looking curiously at her.

"Ay, he did. Many 's the time he has said to me, 'Nat Youlton 's a queer chap; he 's got a prickly outside, but there's good in him for all that. He tries to make out that his heart is all hard, but it's not, and if only the Lord Jesus were to find Nat, what a man he would be!'"

Nat drew his hat over his eyes and turned to go. He did not like to hear such words as these, and yet they did not altogether displease him.

"Ay, that was like Jack," he said; "he was always talking religion."

"I don't think he only *talked* it," returned his widow.

"No," Nat was forced to admit, "he was a good fellow, was Jack." For Nat believed in goodness—when he saw it.

"Don't go till I have shaken hands with you," cried Mrs. Trewarne, as he again tried to move away; "I don't know how to thank you, but I 'll never forget it. You 've saved me from a sore heartache. Ever since the parson told me I 've been thinking of you, and praying God to bless you."

Nat winced, but he could not go away till he had shaken the thin white hand the widow extended to him. As he took it his glance fell on her other hand, which rested on her child's curls, and he noticed how loosely the wedding ring hung on her finger.

"Don't trouble to do that," he said in reply to her last words, "I 'm past praying for. Good-day, Mrs. Trewarne. Good-bye, little 'un. I'm glad I happened to be in the way this morning." And he walked off.

But he never reached the "Sportsman's Arms." When he had got beyond the houses, he remembered that he had not bought his tobacco. He turned back to the shop, and when he came out of it, having made his purchase, his purpose had changed. He took the cliff path again and walked slowly homeward.

It was lovely on the heights at this hour. The sky was blue, save where soft luminous clouds were gathering on the horizon. The sun, like a ball of red gold, seemed sinking into the sea. Its radiance made a golden track across the waves, and gilded the clouds floating near.

The breeze had died down; it was a summer sea that beat against the cliffs with the deep, sonorous music which Nat loved without knowing that he loved it. But there was not a sail visible on all the wide expanse of ocean that stretched before his gaze. The cliffs here were deadly, and mariners did well to steer far from this treacherous coast.

Nat's thoughts were dwelling on Jack Trewarne as he pursued his way. Jack *was* a good fellow, there could be no mistake about that. Nat had always felt it, even whilst he tried to deride Jack for his pious, canting ways.

Canting, in truth, they had never been, as Nat knew well. Jack had tried to be friendly with him; he had done him a good turn more than once, as Nat remembered now, remembering, too, how ill he had repaid Jack's kindness.

And Jack had spoken of him as a prickly fellow with a good inside. Nat smiled as he recalled the widow's words.

Well, he was glad now to think it was Jack's little girl he had saved from harm. Not that it could make any difference to Jack. He was dead and gone; he could know nothing of it.

And yet, did not some people say that those who lived as Jack did never really died, but passed at death into another world where they were happy for ever?

Could they in that world know anything of what happened in this, Nat wondered. What if Jack were not so far off after all? What if he knew of the thing Nat, his old mate, had done that day? Strange thoughts to come to the mind of such a man as Nat Youlton; but, strange though they were, they haunted him, and he could not get rid of them.

He recalled the day on which Jack had died. A sudden death it was. Jack had been spending a holiday at Boscastle, and had gone out with a friend in a fishing boat. Jack was no seaman, but his friend professed to know everything about the management of a boat. Yet he had been heedless of the freshening breeze till the squall burst on them.

Driven on to a sunken rock, the boat had gone down in sight of land. The other man clung to an oar and saved himself by swimming, but Jack never returned to the home where his young wife and his babe of three months awaited him.

Nat remembered hearing a Methodist preacher say that Jack was ready to die. "Ready to die!" What did that mean?

"'Teach me to live that I may dread
The grave as little as my bed.'"

What could make him think of those words now? He had not heard them since he was a boy and used to go with his mother to the little Methodist chapel.

But having presented themselves, the words and the ideas they suggested were not to be dismissed from his mind. They repeated themselves again and again within him, till at last, in impatience, Nat paused to strike a jutting rock sharply with his foot, exclaiming half aloud, as he did so—

"It is all a pack of lies. I don't believe a word of it."

He did not see that a lady was approaching him round an angle of the path. Her feet made no sound on the soft turf, and he had no idea of her presence till she surprised him by saying—"Good evening. You are Nathaniel Youlton, I think."

He looked at her, too astonished to respond. How in the world did she know his name? He had never seen her before that he was aware of. He looked at her, and her clear, grey, kind eyes looked steadily into his.

They drew a response from him, though Nat had no liking for strangers, nor ever considered that he was bound to be civil to anyone. His intercourse with his neighbours even, was of the most limited kind. It was quite an event in his life that this day a woman should have shaken hands with him and thanked him for a kindness done to her, and lo, here was another woman addressing him in pleasant fashion and looking at him with kindly eyes!

"That's my name, sure enough," he returned gruffly.

"And you are the son of Mary Youlton?" He looked at her in mute astonishment and recoiled a step or two. Then he broke out angrily—

"I don't know who you are, but it's no business of yours whose son I am. I've nought to do with you, nor you with me."

"I knew your mother," said Miss Trotter, gently; "I was often with her during her illness at Plymouth."

He made no reply. He almost turned his back upon the lady as he stood with knitted brows gazing over the sea, yet something in his look told Miss Trotter that he was not so indifferent to her words as he wished to appear.

"My name is Trotter," she said; "you may remember it. It was I who wrote to tell you of your mother's death."

He nodded. He could not speak. It was all he could do to maintain his stolid demeanour. Well he remembered the name of Lucy Trotter. The letter so signed was sacredly kept by him, concealed behind one of the blackened rafters of his cottage.

He knew that the lady speaking to him had been good to his mother; he had a dim idea that he owed her gratitude; but no word of thanks could he utter. She came to his help by asking him a question.

"You received the Bible I sent you—your mother's Bible? It was her wish that you should have it."

"Yes, I got it," he said abruptly. Then with an effort, he added, "I hope they buried her decently. I sent money for the funeral."

"You did, and it was well laid out. I was present myself, and I believe everything was as you would have wished. But I hoped you would have come."

"I couldn't." His tone was harsh, but she knew it was because he was struggling with emotion. He turned as if to walk on. She made an effort to detain him.

"May I come and see you some day and tell you about your mother's last hours?" she asked. "You might like to hear many things which I could not well put in a letter." He paused, seemingly irresolute. But no word passed his lips.

"Will you tell me where you live?" she said.

Then he turned from her in apparent anger. "No," he said, "I won't. It's no place for the likes of you. You wouldn't care to set foot in it. No, I say. You mean kindly, I believe, and I'm obliged to you; but there's no good in talking things over. What's past is past, and can't be undone."

"But—" she began.

Already he was striding away, and her voice fell on deaf ears. There was nothing more to be said to him then. She sighed as she watched his strong, manly form pass out of sight. She was disappointed by the way he had received her words, but she would not give up hope.

"His mother prayed for him," she thought; "she believed that her prayers would be answered. What if I have failed? God can reach him in other ways than by me."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A DAZZLING LIGHT.

It is a very frequent occurrence for birds, attracted by the brilliant light, to dash themselves against the thick glass of lighthouses. Land birds, as well as those used to the sea, are sometimes found by light-keepers on the gallery outside the lamp-room. At Calais a net surrounds the lantern, and the birds taken are kept in a museum. A swan on one occasion dashed against the lantern while the keeper was cleaning the glass, and did damage to the lens to the extent of one hundred and sixty pounds!

They dash themselves against the glittering glass.

In the harbour of New York there is an enormous bronze statue, which was paid for by the French people, and given as a present to the people of the United States on their centenary. The figure holds in her hand a large lamp which is lighted by electricity, and the dazzling rays shine out far over the sea.

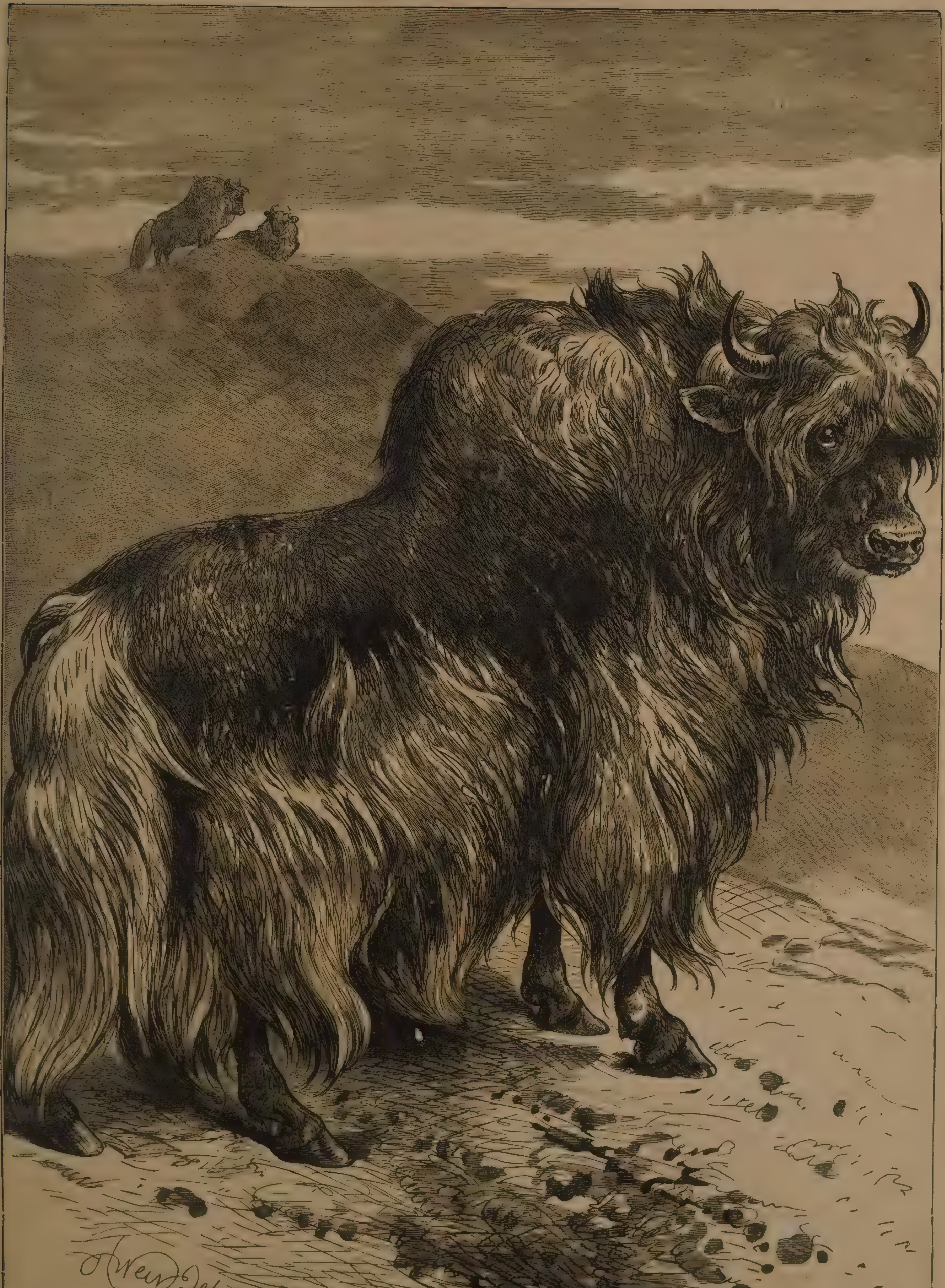
The sailors love to see the light, for it guides them into the harbour, or it tells them where they are if they are only passing along the coasts; but that bright lamp causes the death of hundreds and hundreds of birds. They fly to it, and dash themselves against the glittering glass, just as you may often see a moth fly against a window when there is a bright light in the room.

The poor birds fall down senseless, and so by degrees there is quite a heap of dead bodies round the lamp. It is a sad sight, and yet the birds cannot be taught any better. It is a well-known fact, often taken advantage of by anglers, that fish are also attracted by a bright light.

While the foundations of the Forth Bridge were being laid, the workmen sometimes caught fish which had been drawn to the spot by the light which illuminated the caissons.

On the banks of the Solway, it was a favourite sport to ride along the water's edge at night, carrying flaming torches. The salmon, attracted by the light, pressed as near to it as possible, and were speared by the horsemen. Great acquaintance with that part of the coast was, however, necessary for the safety of the sportsmen, the tide rising so rapidly.

Thus fish, like birds, are sometimes attracted by a glittering light to their own destruction. But you and I can learn that all is not gold that glitters, and that many things which we think would be very good for us would really do us harm.



Drawn from Life] THE YAK, OR GRUNTING OX. [*by Harrison Weir.*

THE GRUNTING OX.

The Yak, or Grunting Ox, derives its name from its very peculiar voice, which sounds much like the grunt of a pig. It is a native of the mountains of Thibet, and inhabits all the loftiest plateaus of High Asia, between the Altai and the Himalayas.

The Noble Yak is a large handsome animal, holding its head proudly erect, having a large hump, extremely long hair, and a very bushy tail. It is a shy and withal capricious animal, too much disposed to kick with the hind feet and to make threatening demonstrations with the horns, as if it intended to impale the rider.

The heavy fringes of hair that decorate the sides of the yak do not make their appearance until the animal has attained three months of age; the calves being covered with rough curling hair, not unlike that of a black Newfoundland dog.

The beautiful white bushy tail of the yak is in great request for various ornamental purposes, and forms quite an important article of commerce. Dyed red, it is formed into those curious tufts that decorate the caps of the Chinese, and when mounted in a silver handle, it is used as a fly-flapper in India under the name of a chowrie. These tails are carried before certain officers of state, their number indicating rank.

The Plough Yak is altogether a more humble-looking animal, carrying its head low, and almost devoid of the magnificent tufts of long silken hairs that fringe the sides of its more aristocratic relation. Their legs are very short in proportion to their bodies, and they are generally tailless, that member having been cut off and sold by their avaricious owner. When overloaded the yak is accustomed to vent its displeasure by a loud melancholy grunting.

NAT, THE QUARRYMAN.

By Eglanton Thorne,

Author of "Nathan Quilter's Fall," etc.

Chapter III.—Little Mary in danger again.

Miss Trotter gave many thoughts to Nat Youlton in the days that followed. She would have liked to speak to him again, and she kept a look out for him as she wandered about the beautiful coast, sometimes accompanied by her aunt, sometimes alone; but they did not meet a second time on the cliff-path.

She inquired about him of her landlady, and was told that he lived in "the little house below the rubble, down Trewarmeth way," but the description conveyed no idea to her mind.

Even if she could have found the house she would hardly have liked to call on him after the decided way in which he had declined the visit.

If only she could come on him by chance! But for a time no such opportunity presented itself. She regretted it deeply. She had hoped to come to Trevena and find out Nathaniel Youlton soon after his mother's death; but circumstances had again and again prevented her from carrying out her purpose, and now it was three years since Mrs. Youlton passed away, and Miss Trotter feared that any impression the event had made on the man's hardened nature might ere this have lost its power.

The little house Nat Youlton called his home, stood in a lonely desolate spot at some distance from the rest of the few houses which, collectively, bore the name of Trewarmeth. It was at the head of a narrow valley running down to the sea, traversed by a tiny dancing stream, that only after heavy rain showed any depth of water. On both sides of the house rose hillocks of rubble—the refuse of the slate quarries that had once been worked at this place, and to which the little building had formerly belonged. The quarries had proved a bad speculation, and had long been abandoned.

The winding hilly road that ascended the vale passed through what had once been a scene of busy labour. There was little trace of it now save the old engine-house and the deep excavations, which, hidden by the high hedges, lay to right and left of the road. The quarry-pits were filled now with dark, still water, going down apparently to the very heart of the earth.

Nature had done her best to hide, or at least beautify, the rents made by man in digging for her treasures. Heather, brambles and flowers of all kinds grew about the brinks of these yawning chasms. Ferns sprang from every cranny of the blasted rocks; they fringed the sheer rocky walls of the deep pits in vividest green, moistened perpetually by the water which dripped from above, and were reflected far below in the clear water.

But for all the beauty there was a weird awe-inspiring look about these grim useless reservoirs of unimaginable depth. It was awful to drop a stone and watch it sink out of sight in the deep, black water.

Such a place would probably fascinate a childish mind; but it was a forbidden playground to the children of Trewarmeth, and a mother would be ready to beat her little one if she found him straying too near its dangerous delights. Yet little care was taken to fence off the dangerous places. Here and there gaps had been made in the hedge which separated the old quarries from the road, and there were easy paths by which little feet might wander to the perilous verges; but, as a rule, it was only the bigger lads who used these paths, and such boys must be left to climb as they will, and take care of themselves, if their mothers would know any peace of mind.

If Nat caught any lads playing about the place, he would drive them off sharply enough; but he was not wont to spend many hours of the day in his own home, and for the most part he forgot that the pits were there.

It was no wonder that Nat spent little time in his home, for there was nothing homelike about the place. It stood amidst the rubble without even a plot of garden-ground before the door. Not that Nat would have cared about a garden. He was not of the quiet patient spirit that can find delight in tending plants.

It was not his hand that had planted the ivy that covered one side of his house. That was just a proof of Nature's goodwill towards those who are indifferent to her, as was also the bank of ferns which grew beside his very door.

Inside the house was comfortless enough. It consisted of two rooms, an outer one in which Nat sat and smoked and cooked and ate, and an inner one in which was his bed. The stone floor was dirty, the low rafters blackened with smoke, and Nat's few possessions were not kept in the neatest order. The place looked to need a woman's care, though Nat would have scouted the suggestion.

He rather prided himself on his ability to dispense with womanly help. In his early days he had for a short time led the life of a sailor. A seafaring life did not suit him, and he was glad to return to work at the quarries; but he had gained some useful knowledge whilst afloat. He had learned among other things how to cook for himself, and won some notion, too, of wielding a needle, so that there was ground for his boast that he could do without a wife.

He could easily have found one to keep his home had he desired it. Despite his wild unsteady ways, there was many a woman at Trevena who glanced with favour on the tall strong fellow, and believed that he would be "all right" if he had some one to look after him. But Nat was ever curt of speech with these. He had no opinion of the sex. If he had spoken out of his inmost heart, he would have said that he had never known but one good woman, and that was his mother, and, since she was gone, he would have nought to do with any other. Even his only sister, many years younger than himself, of whom he had been so fond and proud, had disappointed him and turned out a good-for-nothing girl. Women were all bad alike, and a man did well to hold himself aloof from them.

But though Nat professed to hold this belief he was, perhaps, not so firmly convinced of it as he would fain persuade himself. Certain it is, that in the days that followed his meeting with Miss Trotter on the cliff, three women were often in his mind: that lady herself, Jack Trewarne's delicate-looking widow, and his own mother. It was pleasant to remember how Mrs. Trewarne had thanked him for saving her little girl from accident. Her sweet, gentle, sad face dwelt in his memory, and her low tones repeated themselves in his ear. He was sure that she was a good woman, so sure that he never thought of questioning her goodness. The influence of her gentle life had fallen on him like dew.

"She's different from most women," he said to himself! "Jack was a happy fellow. With such a wife a man might—." But here he checked himself, astonished to find whither his thoughts were carrying him. Then he thought of his mother. She had been a good woman. Not a perfect one? No. He could remember that she had sometimes been a little quick-tempered; but how warm and loving a heart she had! how kind were her thoughts! how tenderly she had cared for her children! She had shown a strong sense of duty and been singularly just in all her ways. If she uttered a hasty word, she was sure to repent of it soon and confess herself in the wrong. She never judged her children unfairly, nor gave them an undeserved punishment. Yet, in spite of such a mother, Mary had—. Nat ground his teeth, and muttered terrible words as he thought of his lost sister.

Sometimes, thinking of his mother, Nat half regretted that he had refused to let Miss Trotter come and tell him about her. Then he felt that to hear about her death would be more than he could bear. Once he drew from its place of safety the letter he had received from Miss Trotter, and tried to read it again. But when he came to where the writer told him that his mother had "fallen asleep in Jesus," he pushed the paper from him with a groan, unable to read more. "Asleep in Jesus!" What did it mean? Such words had been familiar to him in his boyhood; but now—. He rose and moved to the door of his house, stamping his feet angrily on the stone floor and crying aloud—"It is all a pack of lies; there's not a word of truth in it."

And yet in his heart he knew that the religion in which his mother had believed, and by the help of which she had lived her unselfish loving life, was true.

Nat could not think of his mother, nor Miss Trotter, nor even of Jack Trewarne and his wife, without a rush of painful emotions, which he found unendurable. Such thoughts made him at strife with himself. He did his utmost to banish them. His visits to the "Sportsman's Arms" became more frequent; his ways more wild and reckless, so that if Miss Trotter had happened to encounter him within the next fortnight, she would probably have felt less hope of him than before.

But not in vain had his mother prayed for Nat Youlton. God's hand was upon him, leading him by a way that he knew not.

One evening, Nat, with two or three mates, was coming away from his work at the quarries, which were cut deep into the face of the cliff for some way along the shore. They ascended by an iron rope ladder hanging against the rocky wall. This was their only means of exit from the quarry, when as now the tide was up covering the sands below. Nat was the last to set his foot upon the cliff, and as he did so he saw that his comrades had gathered about a woman who, in great distress, was sobbing forth something he could not catch. Her face was utterly colourless, her eyes big with fear, her lips quivered helplessly as she tried to speak; but in a moment he saw that it was Mrs. Trewarne, and hurried forward. At the same instant she recognised him and sprang to meet him. Nat was thrilled by her look and her cry as she caught him by the arm, saying—"Oh, you are a good man, you will help me to find her—Mary, my little Mary."

"Where is she?" he asked, utterly bewildered.

"How can I tell?" she cried reproachfully; "she is lost, that is all I know. They think she wandered down to the sands with the other children; some say they saw her there. Oh, to think of it! If she should have lingered behind on the sands, and it has been high water for the last hour!"

The horror that filled the mother's mind flashed on Nat's as he heard her. The sands at Trevena were especially treacherous. At low tide the waves lay a long way out, and the hard firm sand was a delightful playground for children. The bold broken cliffs, jutting out here and there, formed many remote nooks, and in some places were bored by deep caves. There were various points at which the heedless might be cut off by the advancing waves, and at high water the sea covered every corner and filled all the caves. The little one was indeed lost if the sea had overtaken her in any of these.

For a moment the man's face betrayed his fear. Then he summoned all his manhood to his aid, and spoke roughly to the poor mother, just because his pity for her was so intense.

"Nonsense! What has put such a thing into your head, Mrs. Trewarne? The child didn't stay on the sands, I'll answer for it; she's far too sharp a youngster for that. She's not far off, I reckon, and I'll find her somehow. My mates 'll help me. You go home, Mrs. Trewarne, and I'll soon bring her along."

"Ay, go home," said one of the other men, "and mayhap you'll find the little 'un there. Children are like the dumb animals; they can generally find their way home wherever they stray to."

"Do you think so?" she asked doubtfully, striving to draw hope from his words, yet afraid to return to her empty home.

"As likely as not she'll be there before you," said Nat. "Anyway, we can't search the cliffs properly with a woman hanging on. Come, I don't engage to find the child unless you go."

Then, reluctantly, she turned back, and the men began to search along the coast. Every cliff path was traversed, every ledge and cranny left high and dry explored. Nat was a good climber, and he rounded many a perilous crag and hung on more than one giddy verge in his endeavours to find some trace of the little wanderer. But he might have spared himself the trouble, as the other men remarked. Had he been a father, they said, he would have known that such a tiny child could not possibly climb to any height if she were surprised by the tide.

Nat retorted by saying that it was possible she had fallen over the cliff at some point, and her poor little body might be discovered on a ledge half way down.

They separated and searched the cliffs from right to left as far as it seemed possible that the child could have strayed; but when they met again it was only to report the like result. No one had found anything that could point to the child's whereabouts. All agreed that it was hopeless to search longer. The waves were beating high against the sides of the cliffs. The wind was rising, and brought with it drops of rain. The gulls screamed shrilly as they flitted to and fro. Down below the long reef of dark rocks on which the children were wont to play was visible only as a dark line with foamy breakers dashing over it. The water was above the mouths of the caves. If the child had remained anywhere on the beach her little body must have long since been swept out to sea.

Two of the men had turned homewards. Only Nat and an old, grey-headed man, Jem Wade by name, remained near the sea.

"We'd best be going too," said Wade, "it's no use waiting longer. I'm thinking, mate, you engaged to do more than you *could* do, when you told the widow you'd bring her the child."

Nat responded with an oath.

"Nay, nay, don't be violent," said the older man. "It's the will of the Lord, I suppose, though it does seem hard on the poor thing that she should lose both husband and child by the sea."

"The will of the Lord!" cried Nat, savagely; "if such things as these are the will of the Lord, He's not the God of love the pious people talk about."

"Now, now, you say that because you do not understand," returned the other quietly. "But come, lad, it's going to be a rough night, and you'll do no good if you stay here till to-morrow morning. Let us go and tell the poor thing; it's kindest to let her know the worst."

"I'll not go to her," exclaimed Nat; "I cannot tell her."

"Well, well, then I must do it, or, at least, I'll send my wife. Women understand each other. Good evening, Nat!"

Nat made no reply. He was almost beside himself with trouble of mind. It was agony to him to think of that poor young woman in her loneliness and frail health, bereaved of the child who was so dear to her. How could she bear it? And he could do nothing whatever to help her! That was what made the idea of her sorrow so insupportable.

It was of no use lingering longer by the sea; but he did not want to go to Trevena. He could not bear to hear the people gossiping over what had happened. It was still early in the evening. A sullen glow behind the bank of clouds in the west showed that the sun was yet far from the horizon. Nat walked away from the cliffs and took the road which led up to his cottage; yet he knew that he should not be able to rest in his home when he reached it.

He was not far from his dwelling, when, suddenly in the stillness, the cry of a child fell on his ear. It was not a cry of fear or distress, but rather the shout of a happy little one at play.

Whence did it come? He stood still to listen. Behind the hedge to his right lay one of the deserted quarry pits. It was the deepest of them all, and the black still water that filled it was said to go down to a depth of four hundred feet. The deep dark shaft, lined with lovely fronds of ferns, was visible from the coach-road, and the coachman was in the habit of pointing it out as a curious sight to his passengers.

Its strange picturesque appearance drew people to the place, and so it came about that the hedge was here much broken down, and a child could easily crawl through it to the forbidden ground beyond.

When Nat heard the child's voice again it was followed by the sound of a splash, and he knew in a moment whence it came. Quick as thought he sprang on to the hedge, and pushed his way through the low bushes.

He came into a little wilderness of bracken and brambles, and meadow-sweet bordering the deep dark water. And there, on the very brink of the chasm, sat little Mary, her rosy lips stained by blackberries, the sun-bonnet hanging by its strings from her shoulders soiled by the same; her frock torn by the brambles, but her pretty flushed face as gleeful as it could be.

Not blackberries now engaged her attention. She had been drawn by the fascination of the deep dark water, and, hanging perilously over it, was absorbed in the delightful occupation of throwing down pieces of slate and hearing the splash with which they sank beneath the surface.

Nat held his breath as he saw her fling one of the biggest slates she could find, all but over-balancing herself in the effort. Happily, he had sufficient presence of mind to refrain from calling out, or the shock of hearing his voice so unexpectedly might have sent her falling to the depths.

As he saw the perilous position in which the tiny creature, unconscious of danger, had placed herself, Nat's head swam, and, scarce knowing what he did, this man, who would fain have denied the existence of a God, cried in his heart—"God help me!"

And with that appeal to a Help outside himself he grew calm, and saw what he should do. He plucked a big yellow dandelion growing at his feet, and creeping quietly towards the child, said gently when he was just behind her—no one would have believed that Nat Youlton *could* have spoken in such a tone, but it was almost as gentle as her mother's—"Mary!"

She turned at once, surprised but not alarmed, and he held out to her the flower. Instantly she drew up her feet which were hanging over the rock, rolled herself over, and began to crawl towards him. The next moment she was in his arms, and he pressed her to his heart with a passion of joy and thankfulness such as he had never felt before.

She smiled at him, and sniffed the scentless flower he had given her; but when she saw that he was carrying her away from the fascinating water and her new-found delight, she began to scream, and struggled to get out of his arms.

"No, no, little maid," cried Nat, hugging her closer, "I've got you now, and I'll not let go of you till I've given you to your mother."

"Mother, mother!" said the baby lips, and she was willing to go with him now.

Tired with her play, she nestled happily in his strong arms, and, still with that strange, sweet emotion at his heart, he bore her swiftly to her mother.

Thus a second time did Nat Youlton rescue little Mary from peril.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

STORIES OF SHARKS.

Standing by the gangway of a fifty-gun frigate riding at anchor in the picturesque port of San Blas, admiring the grandeur of the scene, and watching eagerly for the coming of the land-breeze to relieve the intense heat, my attention was attracted to a large Prussian bark lying near to us. A sailor was reaching from her side, in the act of filling a bucket. The sea was perfectly calm, the motion of each separate wave being absorbed in the long heaving swell that set in from the thousand miles of the broad Pacific.

I was startled from my reverie by a sudden splash and a piercing shriek. Turning my eyes towards the bark, I perceived many men rushing to the side, and I missed the sailor whom I had just before seen leaning over the ship. They were evidently looking for something in the water; and after watching them for some time, I went below and mentioned what I had observed to a messmate, who quietly remarked, "Some poor fellow overboard, I suppose."

The next day we were on our way to the landing-place, and when about half-way there we met with a boat from the Prussian vessel pulling towards a dark object floating upon the surface. As we drew near, we could see two of the sailors trying to draw it towards them with a boat-hook. It proved to be the body of a man deprived of the head and one arm.

With much exertion they raised half the corpse out of the sea, as high as the gunwale of the boat, when to our horror and surprise a huge shark rose rapidly to the top of the water, seized the mutilated form in its jaws, and dragged it from the relaxed grasp of the seamen. The voracious creature at once disappeared, leaving us all perfectly amazed and horrified.

I now understood that the painful scream I listened to the day before must have arisen from the seizure of this poor Prussian by the shark. I could not help wondering what might have been the man's state of fitness, passing as he did from perfect health by so dreadful a death into the immediate presence of his Maker.

In the afternoon of the same day, ere the sea-breeze had died away, I returned on board, when my attention was called by the quarter-master of the watch to an enormous tiger shark, apparently asleep near the surface and within a few yards of the frigate. He was the largest shark I ever saw, of immense girth, and striped upon the sides, somewhat like the markings we see on a small scale upon the perch. The captain, who had been a great shark-slayer, sent for his rifle, and fired at the creature's head; the ball glanced without seeming to inconvenience him, for he only gave one violent blow with his tail and dived out of sight.

On another occasion, I had a very narrow escape myself, and thank God that I am spared to relate the event. It was our custom when on shore to bathe in the surf at a secluded bay, into which the natives assured us sharks never entered. After swimming about for some time, I made for the shore, but was prevented gaining a footing by the strong backwash, which swept me off at each attempt to land.

My companions had left the water, and after another determined effort I managed to follow them. When upon the beach, I beheld a shark driven into the shallow water at the very spot I had emerged from. The bulk of the creature was very great, and it had for the moment become grounded, floundering about in its efforts to reach deep water, nor was it successful until the next roller carried it back to sea. Had I remained in the waves for another minute, I too should have met with the fate of the poor Prussian sailor.

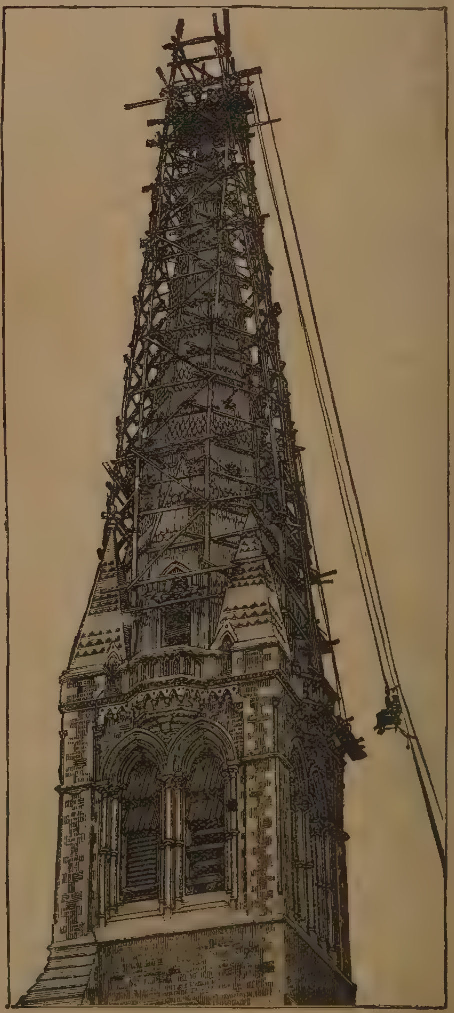
The captain of a mail steamer lying in Kingston Harbour, Jamaica, was returning to his ship when a favourite retriever jumped from the deck and swam to meet the boat. The poor dog knew nothing of the danger he was exposing himself to, for the sea was alive with sharks. The captain saw, to his horror, one of these ravenous fish making for the dog, which also caught sight of it, and became almost paralysed with fear. In an instant the captain had thrown off his coat and boots, and sprang out of the boat, and with a few powerful strokes brought himself beside poor Don, whose head was piteously upraised out of the water, and, seizing him by his shaggy coat, hoisted him into the boat. As he himself scrambled over the gunwale a gleam of white was seen, and two horrid jaws snapped in impotent rage at being disappointed of its prey.

GETTING UP IN THE WORLD.

Two years ago the spire of Christchurch Cathedral, New Zealand, was partly destroyed by an earthquake, and its restoration was at once undertaken by the Rhodes family, who originally built it. Half-past eight a.m. was the hour appointed for the ceremony of laying the last brick, and the ascent of Bishop Julius to the top of the spire was made in a chair attached to a wire rope, precautions being taken to ensure safety as well as rapidity of ascent.

Half way up the spire a halt was made, not that there was anything wrong, but that the photographer desired to commemorate the event. On arrival at the top, the brick was "well and truly laid," the trowel used being one which was presented to the bishop by the contractor. It is of solid silver, richly chased on the blade, and the handle is of ivory, fluted. The inscription is as follows:—

"Presented by W. Stocks (contractor) to Bishop Julius upon his laying the top brick of the Christchurch Cathedral spire, August 5th, 1891." On the completion of the work the Union Jack was hoisted on the top of the spire.



The Bishop's Ascent.

The foundation stone of the cathedral was laid by Dr. Harper, then Bishop of Christchurch, and now the topmost brick has been laid by Bishop Julius, who appears in the chair in our illustration.

HOW TO BE HAPPY.

"WHAT a happy little girl you are, Maggie!" said a lady one day to the child skipping and dancing about at her side.

"Oh no, Miss Thompson," replied Maggie, getting suddenly quiet and thoughtful; "I am a merry little girl perhaps, but not a happy girl."

"What do you mean, Maggie?" asked her friend; "why not happy?"

"Oh, because I am often naughty, you know, and the least bit of naughtiness displeases the good Father in heaven; so how can I be happy?"

"But, my child," replied Miss Thompson, "don't you remember that the good Father sent His dear Son down to die for us just on purpose that all the naughtiness may be forgiven? If only you are sorry, and will come and ask Him to pardon you for His sake, and make you good and holy, then you should trust implicitly, because He has told you He *will* do it, and He always does what He says He will do."

Maggie ran away without saying any more. But the next day she came bounding in with such a beaming face, and this is what she said: "Oh, Miss Thompson, I've gived all my naughtiness to the Lord Jesus, and He has gived me all His goodness instead, and so now I can be quite happy ever after!"

Ah! Maggie did the very thing "the good Father" wanted her to do, and the very thing He wants *you* to do also if you have not done it.

It is a great transaction, yet so simple that it can be summed up in a child's artless words—this handing over our wicked hearts to be washed in the blood of Jesus, and then taking instead "all His goodness," the perfect robe of Christ's righteousness, in which to stand accepted before Him.

What a blessed exchange! If we can only say from our hearts and *mean* it, "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow," and "I lay my sins on Jesus, the spotless Lamb of God," we may be quite sure that He on *His* side will fulfil His assurance: "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53. 6).

Not only so, but will also give you, as we have said, that perfect righteousness which makes even a poor unworthy sinner complete in Him.

"Now I can be quite happy ever after!"

So we need not mope, we need not be afraid to be happy—only *take* and *trust*, and by the Holy Spirit's help endeavour to live accordingly.

M. K. M.

WHO WILL PAY MY DEBTS?

A GREAT failure was caused by a neglect to pay little debts. A careful business man declared that he ought to fail who was guilty of such folly, and added, that he did not owe a single debt. A friend said—

"You mistake. I know a debt that you owe. I know of One who lent you the fine house you live in, the money you have in the bank, all the riches by which you are surrounded, and which you call your own. More than this, He gave you health and friends. How much have you ever paid Him?"

"Ah! that is a different thing. I don't think much about such things; but I always pay every farthing I owe my fellow-men."

"You are like the merchant who pays all his little debts and lets the great ones go, and then boasts,—I always pay my debts. My friend, the great debt of gratitude is yet unpaid. Take care lest the Master cast thee into prison; and thou shalt not come from thence till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing."

Sin leads us into debt! God is Lord of all; and the members of the body, the powers of the mind, were given for His service. We owe Him perfect obedience. So the instant man sinned, that instant he became an insolvent debtor.

Every successive sin plunges him deeper and deeper into debt. How many sins do you commit daily? Allowing only one sin each day, that would be fourteen thousand six hundred sins in forty years! No sinner is ever able to pay his debts! But, thank God! Christ, by His obedience, sufferings, and death, has borne the penalty of sin—paid the uttermost farthing of the debt of the believer. When we could not pay, CHRIST PAID. His incarnation, temptation, tears, obedience, sufferings, and death may be called the ransom price.

They that believe in Christ have a full discharge from the debt in which sin has involved them! Faith is the hand that receives the pardon offered through the blood of the cross. Without faith we continue debtors—we perish. With faith, we have the full remission of every sin, and we have eternal life.

SITTING STILL.

THE following incident may be regarded as not only interesting in itself, but as an apt illustration of the child-like confidence in God which He claims from His children.

It happened in a large school that, when the pupils were assembled, and busily engaged in their work, there was a sudden alarm of fire. As usual, a terrible panic immediately ensued. In wild confusion, and with shrieks and cries, every one darted to the doors of the school-room, forming there a mass so dense as to render escape absolutely impossible to many. In the struggle to get out, several of the children were seriously injured, and one young lady, a teacher, rushed to an open window and jumped out of it.

Throughout this scene of confusion, one girl—one of the best conducted in the school—maintained her self-composure, and remained seated on the bench where she had been when the alarm commenced, without once moving. The colour had, indeed, forsaken her face; her lips quivered, and some tears rolled slowly down her cheeks; but not one cry, not one word escaped, and there she sat silent and motionless as a white marble statue, till all danger was declared to be over.

After order had been restored, and her companions had been brought back to their places, except those who were too much hurt or too much frightened to resume their duties for that day, the question was asked her how it happened that she had been so composed as to sit still when everybody else was in such a state of fright. Her reply was, "My father is a fireman, and he has told me that if ever there were an alarm of fire in the school I must just sit still. I thought of his words, and did as he desired me, and this was what made me stay quiet."

Evidently this little girl had implicit faith in her father's words. She thought of them in the hour of need, and they were the means of saving her from the terrors, perhaps from the injuries, which many others had met with. She had faith in his loving care for her—in the wisdom of his directions.

And if she could feel such unhesitating confidence in the wisdom and love of her earthly parent, should not the child of God exercise a like feeling, and on surer grounds, towards our heavenly Father? Oh! how far do we live below our high privileges, when we do not trust everything that concerns us into the hands of our God.

Who can doubt His wisdom—He who "declareth the end from the beginning," and of whom it is written, "He doeth all things well;" who is "love;" who "so loved the world that He gave His Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life?"

When fainting under the burdens, or struggling against the storms that more or less assail us through the pilgrimage of life, how much more peaceful and happy should we be could we but act upon the gracious assurances of His Word—"Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee: commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass."

How believers would adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour could they ever remember that "their strength is to sit still," and that the command is, "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him; fret not thyself."

"Incarnate God, the soul that knows
Thy name's mysterious power,
Shall dwell in undisturbed repose,
Nor fear the trying hour.

"Thy wisdom, faithfulness, and love,
To feeble, helpless worms,
A buckler and a refuge prove
From enemies and storms."

WILBERFORCE'S CONVERSION.

OFTEN, while in the enjoyment of all that this world could bestow, my conscience told me that, in the true sense of the word, I was not a Christian. I laughed, I sang, I was apparently gay and happy; but the thought would steal across me, 'What *madness* is all this! To continue easy, in a state in which a sudden call out of the world would consign me to everlasting misery, and that when eternal happiness is within my grasp.'

"For I had received into my understanding the great truths of the Gospel, and believed that its offers were free and universal, and that God had promised to give His Holy Spirit to them that asked for it. At length such thoughts as these completely occupied my mind, and I began to pray earnestly.

"As soon as I reflected seriously upon these subjects, the deep guilt and black ingratitude of my past life forced itself upon me in the strongest colours, and I condemned myself for having wasted my precious time and opportunities and talents.

"It was not so much the fear of punishment by which I was affected, as a sense of my great sinfulness in having so long neglected the unspeakable mercies of my God and Saviour, and such was the effect which this thought produced, that for months I was in a state of the deepest depression, from strong convictions of my guilt. Indeed, nothing which I have ever read in the accounts of others exceeded what I then felt."

It is well known, how, after many prayers and conflicts, Mr. Wilberforce obtained full peace in Christ Jesus, and lived to an old age, blessed, and blessing others.

* * *

MIGHTY TO SAVE.

CHRIST is not only "mighty to save" those who repent, but He is able to make men repent. He will carry those to heaven who believe; but He is, moreover, mighty to give men new hearts and to work faith in them.

He is mighty to keep His people holy after He has made them so, and to preserve them in His fear and love. He who begins the good work carries it on; He who imparts the first germ of life in the dead soul, prolongs the Divine existence, and strengthens it until it bursts asunder every bond of sin, and the soul leaps from earth, perfected in glory.

Jesus is "mighty to save," the best proof of which lies in the fact that He has saved *you.* What a thousand mercies that you have not found Him mighty to destroy!

* * *

WILL IT HOLD?

"BE you the parson as preaches at the church in the Grove Road?" said a rough-looking man to me.

"Yes, I am."

"Then a young woman as heard you preach in Smith Street would like to see you. She's very ill. Will you come?"

I at once put on my hat and went with the man. He was not very talkative, and seemed rather shy of me, "not having had much to do with parsons," as he said apologetically. "She's not a bad sort," he added, "only she had been pretty well clemmed, with her husband allus on the spree," and he had promised to find me out for her.

It was to the old part of the town he led me, from which the more respectable people had gone, and to a house which, like the neighbourhood, had seen better days. Now it was dilapidated and ruinous, and ragged neglected children played on the doorsteps and stairs.

These he cleared away for me to pass. We went up to the second floor, and into a room in keeping with its surroundings. Both the walls and floor seemed ingrained with the dirt of years, and in the room were an old table, two chairs, and in one corner a pallet bed; while in another, on a heap of straw, lay a young woman of some three or four and twenty, evidently in the last stage of consumption.

"Then I looked back on my life."

I was afterwards told that night after night she had been dragged out of the bed by her drunken husband, and compelled to seek shelter on the straw with her little boy, and not infrequently had been shut out of the room and made to spend the night on the stairs.

I sat down by her side, and as soon as she recognised me her eyes brightened with welcome.

"It *was* good of you to come," she said, "but I thought you would."

"I was sure to come when you sent for me," I replied; "but what do you want?"

"I heard you preach at the corner of Smith Street," she answered, "and you told us that, however bad we'd been, Jesus Christ would save us if we asked Him. I knew I hadn't long to live, and had been a bad girl, and I wondered would He save me. So I came home, and kneeled down and prayed to Him. Then I looked back on my life, and saw how awfully bad I'd been.

"I remembered, too, how earnestly my Sunday-school teacher had tried to lead me right, and I wouldn't. Perhaps, I thought, I was too bad even for Jesus Christ to save. But I couldn't help praying. And then after that I felt better. I thought I was forgiven; I thought Jesus Christ came to me and forgave me, and I began to love Him so much.

"And now, sir, this is what I want to know: *Will it hold?* Is this really being saved? May I trust Jesus just in this way? You know I am a dying sinful woman. WILL THIS HOLD?—hold in eternity?—hold at the judgment seat?"

"Yes," I answered, "yes, it will. 'He is able to save unto the uttermost all who come unto God by Him.' You may absolutely trust Him."

And she did, and a little while afterwards died full of hope—"a brand plucked from the burning."

J Scott James.

TINKER, TAILOR, AND THE REST OF THEM; OR,
MRS. WATSON'S SEVEN LODGERS.

No. 1.—Tim the Tinker.

Job Lorry was the first of 'em—of my lodgers, I mean—when me and Jacob (that's my husband) went to housekeepin' together in Garr-street.

Yes, he was the first, and a good, honest, hard workin' chap as you 'd meet in a hundred mile of travellin'.

But it ain't much of him I 'm a-goin' to tell, for he wasn't along of us more 'n a few months afore the Lord sent for him, in a hurry, too.

But Job, he wasn't in no fluster, as I 've seen such a many when they was goin' on a journey. All his packin' up and gettin' ready had been done for years, and he 'd nothin' to do now but to start right off, which he did accordin', with a smile on his face and a shine in his eyes, that looked as though he 'd already finished with seein' through a glass darkly, and was meetin' the light of a great joy face to face.

And so he passed out of our sight to where his wife had gone afore him, and leavin' behind three chil'en: Tim, the eldest, a lad of fifteen, Jennie, a lass of eleven, and little Tony, as was only five.

Well, the evenin' arter the funeral, someone knocks at my kitchen door, and who should walk in, very slow and solemn like, but Tim Lorry.

“Please Mrs. Watson,” says he, “I 'm come to ask your advice.”

“And you shall have it, and welcome for all it 's worth, my boy,” says I.

“Well,” says he, “we bein' left fatherless—(here his lip trembled, and his voice grew husky)—and me bein' the eldest, I feel the weight a-pressin' very heavy. God help me, Mrs. Watson!” says he, with a sob as went straight to my heart; “I 'm a bit young, ain't I, to be a fam'ly man?” which he were, for certain; nobody couldn't deny it; nor I didn't, neither. But for all that, sad though I was, I should have laughed, if so be I hadn't been cryin' at the time.

Well, he checked his sobs, did Tim, like a brave feller, and goes on.

“Mrs. Watson,” says he, “we 've no one to look to for help—everythink rests on me. There 's only one of our kin livin', as I knows on, and he 's no good to us. May-be father has told you of a brother of his that quarrelled with him over a bit of money grandfather left, quarrelled with father, and then went away into some of them furrin' parts across the sea?”

“Yes, my dear,” I says, “your father did mention him once, and he said, too, that he 'd heard from others as had met him out in California, that your Uncle John had growed rich and well to do. And bein' as how this is so, Tim,” says I, “hadn't you better write to him, and tell him you 're all left orphans and unprovided for, and ask him what he can do for you?”

But at that, up gets my little man from his chair, his cheeks all red, his eyes with almost an angry light in 'em, which I wasn't a bit sorry to see. And says he, sharp and sudden,

“Ask him—Mrs. Watson? Ask Uncle John as quarrelled with dear father, and all these years never so much as wrote him a word—not I! I 'd sooner starve!”

“Ay, that 's all very well, my lad,” I says; “but what about the other child'en? Are they to starve, too?”

I was sorry when I 'd said it, for that boy he just drawed hisself up as indignant as he could be.

“Starve!” says he, “no, indeed, Mrs. Watson; what do you take me for? It 's me that 's goin' to keep 'em.”

“You?” says I; “why, what can you do?”

One of them handy men as could do most anything.

“I know my father's trade,” he says; “I 've got all his things; and I 'll go his rounds and tinker for his customers. Oh, Mrs. Watson, I 'll work hard, and do all I know to keep the child'en as dear father did, so as not to go askin' charity of the rich uncle.”

And at that I claps the lad on the shoulder, and says I, “Good, my lad, I like your spirit, and if you all wish to remain here in this house, I 'll do what I can to help you in the lookin' arter Jennie and the little un.”

Tim was as good as his word. He just set hisself to the trade, and young though he were, he was that sensible and careful, that his father's old customers kep' him on, and often give him a meal, too, when he 'd done mendin' their pots and pans. And Jennie, she kep' the place tidy, and I larned her to do a little bit of cookin' and washin' and ironin' in the spare time, when she wasn't at school.

Well; about six months passed, and Tim had gone on workin' steady, givin' over all his earnins' to me to do the best I could with 'em, which same I done faithful.

But one evenin' there come a knock at our cottage door, and when Jacob goes to open it, there stands a man neither of us had ever seen afore.

“Do Job Lorry's child'en live here?” asks he, rather short and not over sweet.

“Ay, ay, sir, that they does!” says my Jacob.

“I want to speak to Timothy, the eldest.”

“Very good,” says my husband; “I 'll call him.”

“So you 're Tim,” says the visitor, as the lad comes down the stairs.

“Yes, sir; Timothy Lorry's my name.”

“Well, my boy,” says the stranger, “I 'm your Uncle John, and I 'm just come from California to see the old country again. And here the news of your father's death met me, and now I want to tell you that if you 'll go back with me, I 'll provide for you handsome, Tim—see if I don't!"

"Thankee, Uncle John," says Tim. "You're very kind; but is it," says he, "the sort of life as 'd do for Jennie and little Tony?"

"And pray who said anythin' about them?" says the man quite rough and hard all on a sudden. "It 's you I want; what should I do with a girl and a brat?"

"You mean as how I should leave 'em here, and go away with you, sir?" asks Tim very quiet, but them gray eyes of his a flashin' dangerous.

"Yes," says the visitor, as cool as a cookumber; "that 's just what I do mean."

"And what," says Tim, still a-holdin' of hisself well in hand, "what 's to become of my sister and brother?"

"Become of 'em!" repeats the man, quite careless and onconcerned, "why, there 's allers the Union," says he.

"Sir," says the lad ('for you 're no uncle of mine arter that'), ever since dear father died, I 've been workin' for Jenny and Tony at the trade he taught me; and if you want my answer, why, here it is, short and simple. I 'd sooner share with them I loves—and as loves me—the honest crust I can earn, than I 'd leave 'em for all the gold in California."

At that Mr. John Lorry, he got red in the face—for all the world like the big blusterin' turkey-cock next door, when life goes a little contrairy with him. And says he (it 's the man I mean, in course—not the turkey-cock), "Very well, you pig-headed ungrateful lad; go your own way; only one day—mark my words—you 'll be sorry for this."

"Never, sir, God helpin' me!" speaks up Tim; and then the uncle, he just slams the door, and goes away.

Another nine months passed, and Tim, he worked harder nor ever at his tinkerin', often doin' home work for the neighbours, and for shops as well. And his earnins' now was such that I was able to put away somethin' for him every week, out of the money he give me.

One Saturday afternoon Tim was at home and helpin' me in the garden. Both of us had our backs to the gate, and didn't see it open, nor we knowed nothin' till we heard a voice behind us sayin', very soft and sad, "Timothy, my lad!"

We turns—both of us—and there, lookin' the ghost of his old self, was John Lorry. There was that in the man's sorrowful face, as told us of some great change in him, and Tim he goes right up to him, and takes his uncle's hand, but he had no time to speak afore John Lorry says, still in that humble voice—

"Tim, my heart's broke; my life 's spoilt. God have dealt with me accordin' to my sins. All my pleasure and my aim in life was in addin' to my money, and now by a failin' bank and a dishonest partner, I 've lost all; I 've no one, and nothin' left to me. I went out full, and I've returned empty. And in my distress I tried to think if there was one true faithful heart as would be sorry for me, and I remembered you, Tim—only you. And I says to myself, says I, that lad must have a true faithful heart, for nothin' I could offer him would tempt him to leave them chil'en. And so, poor and humbled, and sad, it 's to you I come, my boy. I can't abear to be alone, and you 're all the kin as remains to me."

"Dear uncle," says my young tinker, his kind heart showin' in them big dark eyes; "dear uncle you 're hearty welcome, ain't he, Mrs. Watson? We 're a gettin' on fine now, and if you 'll make your home with us, we 'll all be so glad."

"I won't be no expense to you, my lad," says John Lorry, wipin' his eyes. "Long ago me and your father, afore he married, used to foller the tinkerin' trade together, and I 've not forgot it. I can earn a livin' that way still. So, if you 're willin', Tim, me and you 'll make the rounds together, or divide 'em between us, as me and your dad did afore."

So Mr. John Lorry took a little slip of a room alongside of the young folk, and fell to work hearty at the tinkerin.' And bein' one of them handy men as could do 'most anythink he 'd a mind to, 'twasn't only tinkerin' as he tried, but chair-mendin', and basket repairin', and umbrella doctorin', and crockery-riveting, and other things besides, so that the earnin's of the two came to good money, and they was able to save a deal.

At last what does they do but open a ironmonger's and tin shop in the next street, and so I lost my lodgers. But the biz'ness, it growed and growed, and gradual they spreads and enlarges their premises, takin' in shops on either side of 'em, and hirin' more hands as the work got heavier. So that afore Tim Lorry come to be twenty, he was one of the partners in a rattlin' trade, makin' money fast, and—what was better—growin' like the boy Jesus when He was on earth—in favour with God and man.

"Ah, Tim, my boy," said John Lorry to my young tinker one evenin', when they 'd come in to have a cup of tea with me and Jacob; "I *did* think you was a fool to refuse my offer when I wanted to take you back to California with me, and you wouldn't, but I 've come to see clearer now. You stuck to your dooty and them chil'en, and you have your reward. If you 'd come with me, you 'd have shared in my ruin. It was your faithfulness to what was right that kep' you out of danger, and brought your poor old uncle back to you; and now God have prospered us in our basket and store, just as He turned the captivity of that there patient man in the Bible, as suffered so much, yet held fast his integrity. Ah, Tim, my boy, we 've much to be thankful for; God 's been very good to us, and I do think me and you is the two happiest tinkers in all England." *M. E. Ropes.*

ANECDOTE OF WASHINGTON.

In 1789, when Washington was travelling slowly through New England, receiving and paying visits, he called at a house in Connecticut. When he departed, he was conducted to the door by his host and hostess, accompanied by their daughter, a young girl just in her teens. She of course did not presume to say good-bye to General Washington; but as she opened the door for him and stood modestly aside that he might pass out, the great ex-commander-in-chief of the ragged Continental army, looking down upon her from his six feet two of stature, laid his hand with stately kindness upon her head, saying, "Thank you, my little lady; I wish you a better office." "Yes, sir," she replied, with a gentle courtesy, "to let you in."

CANDLES AND SOAP.

SECOND ARTICLE.

By a turn or two of a machine the candles are pushed up from below and stand all ready topsy turvy—the bottom of the mould being the top of the candle. They are not, however, released from their inverted position until the moulds are once more filled; and can you see why, reader?

Because by this means the wicks are kept strained and tight. When the second edition of candles have set, then a boy separates the first with one stroke of a sharp knife, and another boy comes along with a barrow and scrapes off all the grease from the top of the moulds. The candles are then taken to a circular saw, which trims them up.

The old-fashioned dip we need not enter into, as its name implies its origin, namely, that the wicks are dipped into the hot fat.

Our next visit was to the room where they make the night-light boxes. The wood is brought specially from Sweden, and is cut by an inverted plane into very thin slices, called scaled board. The machine is so well adapted to this work that we saw some strips of wood far thinner than ribbon, which take 480 to make the depth of an inch.

These scaled boards are pasted with paper and taken to a machine called a drum, which just cuts the wood without the paper, so that it can be doubled into a box as soon as the corners are pulled out.

They are then taken away by women to their own homes, and brought back covered and ready for the night-lights. The same board, only thinner, is used for the night-light holders with which we are all familiar; one woman puts the label on with paste inside and gum out, to render it a little waterproof. This is done very rapidly on a kind of rolling pin. They are then set to dry. When dry they are put on a small lathe and separated with one touch from a knife (having been made in half-dozens).

The next process is to put the bottom of the holder in, which is ingeniously done by a little machine, which, at the same time, makes a hole for the wick in the centre.

The wicks are soaked in wax before being used; when cold they are passed through a little square of tin, the end is dipped in resin, and there stands the night-light case all ready for the fat, which is chiefly composed of cocoa-nut, and is poured into them half set.

Our guide told us they made thirty-seven million night-lights last year, and when one remembers that there are but three hundred and sixty-five nights in the year, we cannot help thinking how many people there must be who like a light at night. Do they all know how they are made?

Our limits are nearly reached, and we have as yet said nothing about soap.

The common kind is, of course, simply composed of grease, soda, and water, and from this emanate all the fancy soaps.

It is boiled, run into large moulds, from which it is taken out in plain slabs, cut into bars by a machine, and then piled up in stacks to dry, very much like bricks.

When scented soap is required the household is broken up, put into a large pan, heated by steam, the desired scent and colour are put in, and the whole "crutched up" (to use a technical term) by a large screw. It is then put into a large case; when cold taken out and cut by wire, just as the cheesemonger does his cheese.

It is then cut into bars and taken to a machine with a marble slab, where is a gauge for the thickness; a perpendicular wire cuts it into pieces, and it is allowed to dry somewhat before it finds its way to the stamping machine. The said machine has a double mould, one under and one over, so one pressure rounds off the pointed edges, and gives the printing on both sides. It is then placed on trays and stored away to dry.

Passing out of the factory a casual remark revealed to us that we were treading on historical ground.

The place on which we stood had formerly belonged to Cardinal Wolsey, and many a time his State barge had floated up the little creek which runs through the factory yard.

"Pride comes before a fall," and the sad example of the pride and fall which Wolsey's fate gives us, came to us as a salutary warning not to be puffed up by knowledge lest we, too, should be snuffed out as a candle.

* * *

HOUSEHOLD RECIPES.

For repairing Family Jars.—Mutual love, well stirred with forbearance, mixed with readiness to forgive, and general good temper, is an admirable cement. It is well to let all family jars be shelved at once.

Preserves.—The temper is best kept by using as little vinegar as possible; the heart, by using abundance of the oil of grace; treasures, by laying them up where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt.

Creams.—The milk of true faith, if it stands long enough, yields the cream of assurance: if flavoured with the essence of love, it is a delicious dish.

Stews.—These are best avoided by leaving our troubles with Him who sent them.

Pickles.—Those people get into them most who meddle with other people's business, or who act on the will of policy rather than on that of straightforward truth and unswerving honesty.

Dressed Peacock.—This is too common and too poor a production to be introduced into Christian families.

To cure Colds and Heart-burns.—Do all the good you can, live near to God, love your neighbour as yourself.

Fritters.—Novel reading, silly conversation, gossiping, and late rising soon fritter away time. Christians have not a moment to waste.

Tart.—Some think tart replies to be smart, but it is never wise to let our wit wound other people's feelings. Soft answers turn away wrath—tart speeches lead to general sourness.

Sauce.—Never to be tolerated in children—a vulgar and evil thing in any one; generally found to go with goose.

Crabs need grafting with some sweeter fruit.

Toasts.—Best drunk in water. Toast and water is far better than health drowned in wine.

Salt is good. Be sure to avoid the salt when it has lost its savour.

Puffs betray the weakness of those who need them: self-praise is no recommendation.

Sweets.—The sweets of doing good will never cloy; the more of them we enjoy, the better.

GOOD NURSING.

It is an established fact that there is as much in good nursing as in good doctoring to cure sickness, since, if the patient is left with a fussy, fidgety person to carry out the best of doctors' directions, the game is pretty well-nigh up. And, oh, the difference there may be in the way of coming into a sick-room and leaving it; in opening the door and closing it; in handing a glass of water without spilling it, and in always slopping it over—none but a weary, sick person may know!

There are *born* nurses, as there are born artists or poets—gentle, soft-stepping creatures, who let in the sunshine with their very presence, just with their cheerful voices and beaming eyes, and all-embracing charity, which Christ-like, does not blame the sufferer for the impatient word, when flesh and heart are failing, and the silver cord is well-nigh loosed; but with softest touch and pitying eyes soothes in place of condemning, and helps the poor sufferer, just as a mother's warm breast lulls her baby to forget its pain. A cheerful tone of voice is often worth more than a whole chemist's shop.

Fanny Fern.

* * *

Ear of the Owl.

STORIES ABOUT OWLS.

The owls are, perhaps, one of the most interesting families of birds of prey. They are, with one or two exceptions, night birds, and every organ of their bodies is peculiarly adapted to enable them to find their prey when scarcely any other animal can see.

The pupil of the eye is very sensitive, and in a strong light contracts, so that the bird can hardly see at all. When there is little light, the pupil expands to a great extent, and enables the bird to see distinctly the smallest objects. The eyes are surrounded by a circle of soft white feathers shaped like a ruff, which gives to the owl its distinguishing appearance.

The ear is very large, and peculiarly shaped to enable it to hear the slightest noise. The plumage is very white and abundant, causing the owl to look thick, stout, and even clumsy; but when stripped of its feathers the bird is surprisingly small. The wing is fringed with a soft silky down, which causes it to sweep through the air in perfect silence. Thus softly gliding on noiseless wing, with its large sharp eyes and acute ears, the owl is well fitted for his work, which is to hunt the meadows and hedge-banks with the regularity of a pointer dog, in search of mice, young rats, small birds, and insects.

The owl is one of the most harmless and even useful of the feathered race. The immense number of vermin it destroys is almost incredible; and it thus preserves the crops from one of their greatest dangers. A striking instance of this occurred several years ago in Somersetshire, when, in the course of the summer, a countless host of mice overran the country so as to threaten the destruction of everything growing. Their ravages were checked by the sudden arrival of a number of owls, which came from all parts to prey upon them.

Some kinds of owls have a little tuft of feathers on the sides of their heads, which they raise so as to resemble ears or horns, whence they are called Horned Owls.

By far the most beautiful variety is that named the Snowy Owl, which may fairly be called, from its noble appearance, the king of owls. It rarely visits England, its favourite home being among the perpetual snows of the northern regions. Its thick dazzling plumage keeps it warm, and renders it almost invisible as it skims along the snowy plains; so that it can approach its prey unawares.

But the most common and useful of all British owls is the Barn or White Owl.

> "The owl that, watching in the barn,
> Sees the mouse creeping in the corn,
> Sits still, and shuts his round blue eyes
> As if he slept—until he spies
> The little beast within his stretch—
> Then starts, and seizes on the wretch!"

This bird, instead of avoiding man, comes close to his dwelling, and often frequents the barns and sheds of the farmer, whose true friend he is.

Mr. Waterton, the well-known naturalist, paid great attention to the habits of these birds. He made a sort of dwelling for them on the ruins of an old gateway, and trained some ivy round it, so as to conceal the place. In about a month after everything was ready, a pair of barn owls came and established themselves there.

This succeeded so well, that he provided similar places, which were also occupied by owls. He so contrived the first recess in the gateway that he could examine it whenever he pleased, and the birds, confident of protection, soon betrayed no fear when strangers mounted up to take a look at their abode.

Mr. Waterton says, "Some years ago, on a fine July evening, long before it was dark, as I was standing on the middle of the bridge, and watching the owl as she brought mice to her nest, all on a sudden she dropped into the water. Thinking that she had fallen down in epilepsy, my first thoughts were to go and fetch the boat; but before I had well got to the end of the bridge, I saw the owl rise out of the water with a fish in her claws and take it to the nest."

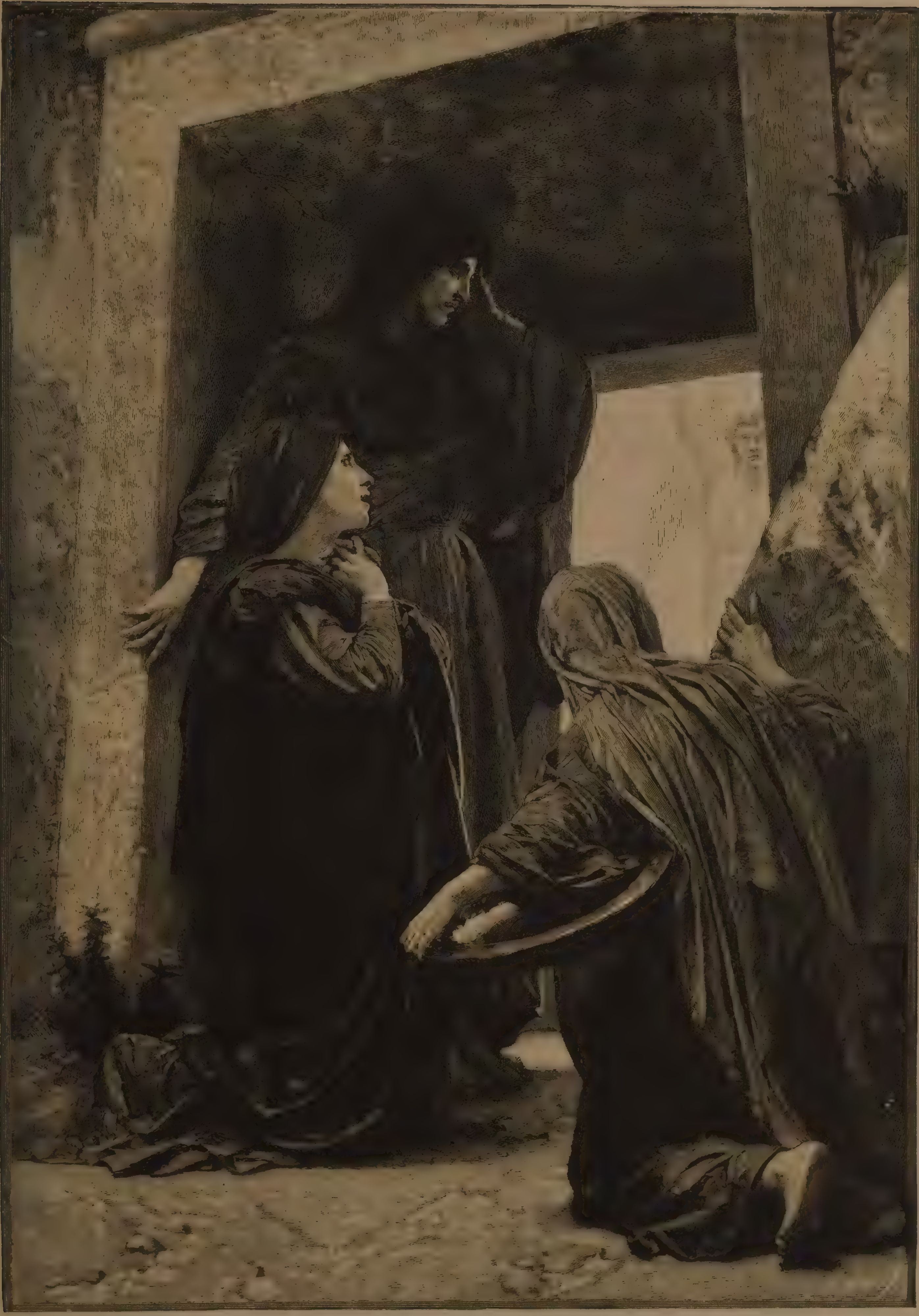
On one occasion, a sportsman fired at a very large one and broke its wing. He took it home to a farmhouse, where, after remaining for several days, it disappeared, no one could tell how. Almost every day after its mysterious departure, hens and chickens also vanished, one by one, in the same unaccountable manner, till, in eight or ten days, very few remained.

The fox and the weasel were thought to be the authors of the mischief, until one morning the mistress of the house, rising before daylight to bake, in passing towards the oven, surprised

The Owl and its Prey.

her late prisoner, the owl, regaling himself on the body of a newly-killed hen!

The thief instantly made for his hole under the house, from which the enraged matron, soon dislodged him with the broom-handle, and killed him without mercy. In this snug retreat were found the greater part of the feathers and many fragments of her family of chickens.



From the Painting by Bouguereau)

THE WOMEN AT THE TOMB.

(In the Paris Salon, 1890.

NAT THE QUARRYMAN.

By Eglanton Thorne,

Author of "The Old Worcester Jug," "Nathan Quilter's Fall," etc.

Chapter IV.—Nat has a Visitor.

NAT YOULTON never forgot the moment when he entered Mrs. Trewarne's home — the one room which was all the home she had—and placed the lost child in her arms. He stayed for no thanks, but was gone directly. He would have given no explanation of what had happened had not one of the neighbours stopped him on the threshold with an inquiry as to where he had found the little one. He had discovered her, he said, playing inside the deepest quarry pit down at Trewarneth.

An exclamation of horror followed the statement, but Nat waited to hear no comments upon what had happened. His own feelings were too much moved for him to be able to listen calmly to words.

There had been friends with Mrs. Trewarne when he entered; but he had no idea who they were. He could not have told how he found the widow; but he carried with him the vision of how the light of half-incredulous joy had broken upon a countenance that a moment before was wan with hopeless anguish, and how the lips had quivered and tears come instead of smiles as the mother looked upon the bonny face of the child she had thought she would never see in life again.

He could hear the low, fervent "Thank God" coming from the heart of one who had been looking in the grim face of Death, and the passionate weeping which had followed.

He echoed that "Thank God" as he stood alone beneath the evening sky and listened to the sullen roar of the waves, the hoarse cries of the gulls, and the blustering of the boisterous wind.

Thank God, aye, thank Him a thousand times that the pretty child was safe and warm in the arms of her mother, and had not fallen a prey to the cruel waves, as every one had feared; or that more awful fate, as it seemed to Nat, the deep, dark, deadly abyss of still water on the brink of which the child had played so heedlessly—the strong man shuddered as he recalled the sight—thank God she had been saved from that!

The next evening Nat was sitting at the door of his cottage, smoking his pipe, whilst with a large needle and coarse thread he made an attempt to mend his jacket, on which he had inflicted an ugly rent whilst at his work that day.

His mates had thought Nat uncommonly surly because he had resolutely turned homeward when his work was done; but he was in a mood in which the attractions of the "Sportsman's Arms" had no charm for him, nor did he wish to show himself in Trevena. He did not want people to question him about his finding little Mary, nor yet as to how the widow had looked, and what she had said when he gave the child back to her.

And though he would have liked well to see how Mrs. Trewarne looked by this time, he shrunk from seeming to thrust himself upon her notice. So he went straight home when his work was done, and settled himself to his job of mending, as though he cared nothing for Trevena and its inhabitants, though all the while his thoughts were busy with the one person there who most interested him.

It happens to us all once in a while, yet is generally regarded as a marvel, that unexpectedly there appears before us the person of whom we are thinking. Nat was very much astonished when, hearing steps on the rubbly path that led to his door, he looked up and saw Mrs. Trewarne approaching, leading by the hand little Mary.

The path was steep as well as rough, and she was quite out of breath by the time she reached him. She could hardly utter her "good evening," and distressed to see her so weak and panting he hurriedly brought forward a chair, dusting it with his coat ere he invited her to sit down.

"Thank you," she said, as she dropped on to it; "Mary and I have come to see you."

"You're welcome," he replied; "but don't be in a hurry to talk. It's a steep road and you're fairly done up."

"I'm a poor walker at any time," she said.

"So I can see," he returned. "Well, well, it's a fine evening after the rain. And how's this little maid by this time?"

"Oh, she's as well as possible," replied her mother. "She little thinks what trouble she caused me yesterday, bless her! You did not give me a chance to say a word to you last evening. When I first saw the child I could think of nothing else. Afterwards when I looked round for you, you were gone."

"And the best thing too," he returned, "you did not want me when you'd got little Mary. Come, there's no need of words about it. If you was glad to see her, I was glad to bring her, so there!"

"You're a kind man," she said, tears springing to her eyes; "you don't know what I went through. I know one ought to submit to the will of God, but I don't think I could have borne it. And you really found her beside that dreadful pit?"

"Yes, yes; but what's the good of thinking about it now it's all over and done with?" he asked, almost impatiently. "Come here, little Mary, and let me give you a scolding. A pretty youngster you are to upset your mother so."

His tone did not promise a scolding, and little Mary came to him readily. He swung her on to his knee, and began to play with her.

"You're fond of children!" said Mrs. Trewarne, as she watched him.

"I didn't know that I was," he replied awkwardly; "I think perhaps I might grow fond of this one."

Mrs. Trewarne looked pleased. She glanced round the room, noting a dozen things that would have escaped a man's eyes. She saw how much a woman's hand might do to make the home more comfortable. She would have liked well to set the place to rights, for she felt deeply grateful to the man who had twice saved her child from danger, and she longed to do something for him.

At last her glance fell on his coat with the big needle sticking in it, and she remembered how he had been occupied when first she caught sight of him.

"You were mending your coat when we came up," she said. "You'll excuse my saying it, but I think that's a job I could perhaps do better than you. I wish you would let me try."

"No, no," he said, but he smiled at the suggestion; "you've no need to trouble yourself with that. I reckon you've work enough of your own."

"I have done little work to-day," she said. "I could not leave little Mary; I could not bear her out of my sight somehow. It would be no trouble but a pleasure if you would let me do it."

He shook his head but smiled again.

"I dare say you think I can't set a stitch for myself," he said, "but you must remember I have been a sailor, and a sailor knows how to use his needle."

"Well, you might let me see what you were doing," she suggested, persuasively; "perhaps, after all, you do beat me with the needle." And she stretched out her hands for the coat.

"No, come, now, I don't say that," he returned, as he gave it to her, "and I must confess I am not making a good job of this. You see it is a jagged tear, and the edges won't join, and I am boggling it terribly."

"I see, and I'll soon set that right," she said, determinedly. She had the coat now on her lap, and meant to keep it there till she had mended it. "But what a needle! I can't work with this. Why, it's like a skewer!" And she laughed as she held it up.

"I likes a needle as I can feel," replied Nat. But he laughed, too, and so did little Mary.

"I should like this needle if I had to sew sail-cloth," returned Mrs. Trewarne. Meanwhile she had drawn from her pocket a neat little housewife, found therein just the sized needle and the kind of thread she required, and begun to stitch busily.

Nat sat back in his chair, still rocking little Mary on his knee, and watched her mother with the utmost interest. It was wonderful how pleasant it was to him to see the neat, fair-haired woman stitching away at his coat. His dreary, ill-kept cottage seemed all at once to feel like a home.

"You don't belong to these parts?" he said, presently. "Jack brought you from a distance, did he not?"

The question kindled a glow of colour in her pale cheek.

"I was brought up in Wiltshire," she replied, "but I was in service at Falmouth when Jack met me."

"Oh," he returned, "I thought you was different, somehow, from the women about here."

"You have always lived at Trevena, have you not?" she asked.

"Yes, except when I was away on a voyage for fifteen months," he answered.

"And your father and mother were Trevena people?" she said.

He nodded his head. After a moment something prompted him to add—

"My mother was a woman of your sort."

She looked up at him in surprise.

"Of my sort?" she repeated with a smile. "What sort is that, pray?"

"A right good sort," he returned. "She was neat and trim to look at, quick with her hands, and clever at most things. The way you use that needle reminds me of her. Ay, she was a good mother to me

Involuntarily the tone in which he uttered the last words expressed regret, and the woman's ear was quick to note it.

"What a blessed thing it is for a man to have had a good mother!" she said. "It seems to me there is no excuse for such a one if he is not a good man."

Nat made no reply to these words. He began to jog little Mary to and fro, and her merry laugh rang out on the air, filling up the pause that ensued in the talk. But he had not failed to grasp the significance of the widow's words.

"And what sort of man was your father?" asked Mrs. Trewarne, presently, when Mary grew a little quieter.

"I never knew much of him," replied Nat. "He died when I was a little chap. My mother had to work hard to support us."

"Ah! poor soul," said the widow, with feeling in her tones—"To support us, you say; so you had brothers and sisters?"

For a few moments Nat made no reply. Looking up Mrs. Trewarne was surprised to see what a dark cloud had gathered on his face. He spoke at last in a sullen, constrained manner.

"There was one other—a sister—but she went long ago. I've no one belonging to me now."

"Oh," said Mrs. Trewarne, disturbed to find that she had unwittingly touched upon a painful subject. Then, hoping to make a pleasant diversion, she added, "so you were your mother's only son. I'll be bound you did all you could for her, and were a comfort to her."

To her dismay a fierce oath broke from Nat's lips as she spoke. But it was with himself that he was angry, not with her.

"A comfort to her!" he cried; "my word! You ask the neighbours about that. What! have you been all this time in Trevena and not heard my character? I'll just tell you the truth myself. I was a bad son to my mother; I caused her nought but trouble as long as she lived, and at last I broke her heart. Yes, I won't deceive you. I am an out-and-out good-for-nothing fellow, as bad as a man can be. Now you know."

Yes, she knew, perhaps she knew before; but though her face wore an expression of pain she did not appear to shrink from him, and when she spoke her words were not at all such as he expected to hear.

"I am glad to hear you say that."

"Glad!" he repeated in amazement; "*glad* to hear how bad I am!"

"Not glad that you are bad," she said gently, "but glad that you know it, that you feel that you are a sinner."

"Oh, as for that," he laughed in a hard, mirthless way, "I know well enough that I am a sinner. I'm the last man to wish to pass myself off as a saint."

"Then you are one of those whom Jesus loves, whom He came into the world to seek and to save."

"Oh!" exclaimed Nat, taken aback by her words—"I don't know anything about that; I don't believe in any of those things."

"In what things?" she asked. "Surely you believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and that He came into the world and died to save us from sin?"

"Perhaps—" he hesitated and his manner softened, "I don't know. My mother believed it, but I never think of such things. It's no concern of mine."

"No concern of yours!" she repeated breathlessly, "how can you say such a thing? Surely if Jesus loved you and me so well as to die that we might be saved from sin, it is *everything* to us."

She would have said more; but excitement brought on the cough to which she was subject. Nat almost forgot what she had said, in his dismay to see how her slight form was shaken by the violent cough.

When the paroxysm was over she leaned back in her chair, weak and tired.

"Do you often cough like that?" he asked anxiously.

"Not very often," she said quietly; "but it does not do for me to talk too much. See, I have finished your coat; I have made the best job of it I could."

"You have done it first-rate," he said; "I'll be real proud to wear it, and I'm much obliged to you. But about your cough. Is there no doctor's stuff you could take for it?"

"I have some medicine the chemist at Camelford gave me," she replied. "It will be better soon, I have no doubt."

"You really ought to take care of yourself," he said, still anxious.

"Oh, I do," she replied; "and what is better, I know that God is taking care of me and little Mary. so I am not afraid."

"You're a brave woman," he said, with admiration in his tones.

"Not brave at all," she responded, with a smile. "No braver than Mary is when she puts her little hand in mine, and knows that she will be safe wherever I lead her. But now I must take her home. Kiss Mr. Youlton, Mary, and thank him for being so good to you."

It was with a strange sense of awe that Nat stooped to receive the child's pure sweet kiss. With reverence, too, he shook hands with her mother.

"If there's anything I can do for you at any time, Mrs. Trewarne, you know where to find me," he shouted after her as she went down the path.

She turned and nodded her thanks. Little Mary nodded, too, with much energy. Then they passed out of his sight, and he looked round on his bare dingy room.

What a bright spot she had made in it when she sat in that chair and mended his coat! What pleasant ways she had! What a gentle voice! He had never seen another woman just like her. What a home she would make of his cottage if—

Suddenly he became aware of the absurdity of his thoughts, and laughed at them in a bitter hopeless way.

"As if she ever would—such a man as I am! She's as different from me as light from darkness, or snow from pitch. It's a sin even to think of such a thing—a man like me!"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

CHIPPINGS.

Superstition.—We now and then meet with some notable instances of superstitious practices in country districts, and even in places where the customs of town life might be supposed to have weakened the force of old nations. Some time since a young woman was drowned in the river Derwent, at Milford, six miles from Derby. The river was dragged, but the body could not be found; and then somebody suggested a sure mode of discovering its whereabouts. If a drum were beaten up and down the river, it would cease to sound when the boat in which the drummer is seated arrived over the spot where the corpse lay. For several hours a boat passed up and down the river, the drummer plying his drumstick vigorously, but no other result than a continuous noise was obtained. At length the melancholy tattoo was given up, and, the more practical measure of drawing off the water at Little Eaton paper-mills being adopted, the body of the poor girl was recovered.

Word Transformations.—*N.B. Dot your eyes. Cross your t's. Then note what a single letter can do:—*

B makes a road, broad; turns the ear to bear, and Tom into a tomb. *C* makes limb, climb; hanged, changed; a lever, clever; and transports a lover to clover. *D* turns a bear to beard, a crow to crowd, and makes anger, danger. *F* turns lower regions to flower regions. *H* changes eight to height. *K* makes now, know. *L* transforms a pear to pearl. *N* turns a line into linen, a crow to a crown, and makes one, none. *P* changes lumber into plumber. *S* turns even to seven; makes hove, shove; a word, a sword; a pear, a spear; makes slaughter of laughter, and curiously changes "having a hoe" to "shaving a shoe." *T* makes a bough, bought; turns here to there, alters one to tone, and transforms the phrase, "allow his own" to "tallow this town." *W* does well—hose are whose, are becomes ware; on, won; omen, women; so, sow; vie, view; it makes arm, warm; and turns a hat into—what? *Y* turns fur into fury, a man into many, to to a toy, ours to yours, and a lad to a lady.

A Simple Fire-Escape.—Let each bedroom be supplied with a coil of rope, made in part, at least, of some material which shall resist the action of fire. Let a strong hook be fitted within the room and below the window, over which an eye at one end of the rope may be slipped. Let three or four broad, flexible rings be put on the rope at the end which is in the room. Let the other end of the rope be provided with a strong pointed iron bolt, to be driven into the ground of the street, that the rope may be kept straight if necessary.

Suppose a person is aroused to find that exit to the street by the usual way is cut off. He takes down the coil of rope, slips the eye into the hook, opens the window, and lowers himself hand-under-hand into the street. Another follows his example, and so on. Many persons may escape in this way in a few minutes.

But suppose there are ladies and children in question, who might not perhaps have the coolness or the ability to employ this hand-under-hand method, but who have the instinct of self-preservation sufficiently strong to hold on and slide down. In this case the rope could be inclined at an angle with the house and kept in position by the spectators below, and the descent would be easy, the flexible hand-ring running down the rope carrying with it the one who is escaping. Another person seizes another ring, and escapes in a similar manner.

B. G. Jenkins.

Terribly frightened he fell on his knees.

THE "LION" SERMON.

There are all kinds of sermons, because there are all kinds of men as preachers. Long sermons and short sermons,—dry sermons and interesting sermons,—sermons which do good and sermons which do harm,—but which one of my readers ever heard a Lion Sermon? And yet such a sermon was preached on October 16th in a certain church in London. For nearly 250 years a sermon has been preached in the church of St. Katherine Cree, Leadenhall Street, and the text always has the word lion in it. Last year the text was from 1 Samuel 17. 34, "Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a *lion* and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock."

The origin of this Lion Sermon was as follows. During the reign of Charles I. there was a very wealthy and prominent merchant of the City of London, called Sir John Gayer. In 1635 he served as sheriff, and twelve years later he occupied the high position of Lord Mayor of London.

In those days merchants went themselves to foreign countries in pursuit of their business, and it was on such an occasion that Sir John Gayer had a most remarkable adventure. One day, when travelling on business in the East, he happened to get separated from his party, and when thus alone a lion sprang out in front of him. Terribly frightened, he fell on his knees and besought God to protect him, as he was utterly helpless. As he prayed the lion walked away without touching him. He rose from his knees with his heart full of gratitude for his miraculous escape, and he determined that when he reached his native land he would take steps to commemorate this answer to prayer.

Accordingly, as soon as he landed at Plymouth he built almshouses in that town for the poor; and at his death, which occurred in July, 1649, he requested in his will that a sermon should be preached every year on October 16th, the day of his escape from the lion, in the church of the parish in London where he resided. Such was the origin of the Lion Sermon, and it is the only one, I believe, of its kind. But ought it to be? Is Sir John Gayer the *only* Englishman who, through the goodness of God, has escaped from the lion? Must we go back 250 years before we can find a man who has such a cause for gratitude?

We talk of the British lion,—and he certainly does exist. How about that terrible lion that haunts all the roads and paths and ways up and down this land,—that cruel spirit of evil, Satan,—who as a roaring lion goeth about, seeking whom he may devour? I wonder how many readers can say, "Yes, there is that terrible lion in the way, but, through the loving goodness of God, I have escaped out of his clutches."

You certainly could not have saved yourself. If the Lord had not rescued you, you would have fallen an easy prey to Satan. But if the Lord has delivered you from the destroyer, how about your gratitude? Your whole life ought to be a lion sermon,—a thank-offering to God for your escape, and a public confession of your gratitude before your fellow-men.

Take care that Sir John Gayer does not rise up in the day of Judgment and condemn you. He was grateful to God for delivering him from the mouth of a lion who could only hurt and destroy the body, and he let his fellow-citizens know that he was grateful. But God has done much more for you by delivering you from him who can destroy both body and soul.

Year after year has gone by, and still that Lion Sermon is preached; and the old city merchant seems to speak to us, and beg us to put our whole trust in God.

But we shall have heard Sir John Gayer's story to little purpose if we do not also learn to be thankful. It seems natural to turn to our Father when we want Him to do something for us; but how often do we remember to thank Him when He has done it?

Of the ten lepers who were healed, how many were there who returned to give praise to God? Only one!

Oh, let us try to be more thankful to God for what He has done for us, more thankful for all His care, and more thankful to each other for all the little acts of kindness which make life bright.

BREAD UPON THE WATERS.

She hastened to the hospital, and stood by his bed.

Away back in the years that are gone, a rich merchant of New York, returning to his home one cold November evening, found a poor barefooted child upon his doorstep, shivering and in tears from suffering and want.

Many would have driven her away, but a glance at her face struck pity to his heart, and he took her into his house, warmed her by the fire, fed her at his table, and clothed her in the warm cast-off garments of his own little girl.

He listened to her tale of sorrow, believed it, and, with a basket of food and an old but comfortable blanket, sent her home, telling her to come to his house whenever food, clothing, or fuel was needed.

It seems that the poor family struggled on as best they could, and whenever poverty pinched too bitterly, the girl came to the merchant's house for the proffered charity, until her face became quite familiar.

One day she came in great sorrow and bitter weeping. Her mother was dead, and she had no one to turn to in the bereavement of her little heart but the kind merchant. He buried the poor dead woman, and took the girl to his home until he could, from the dying directions of the mother, write to her relations; for it seems the mother had married against the will of her parents, and had been disinherited.

During her life she had preferred to remain in poverty rather than appeal to her relatives, but at her death, pride was swallowed up in anxiety for her helpless child. The relations came and took the child away, and then her whereabouts were lost to the merchant.

Years rolled by, and misfortune

overtook our man of generous heart. Death of his family and bankruptcy of his fortune left him a poor and desponding man. Many were the ways he strove to rise again, but always failed, until he finally kept a street stand, selling apples and cake to the children.

One day a runaway team overturned his stand, and injured him so severely that he was taken to the hospital, and a paragraph of the accident appeared in the papers, with his name and a sketch of his life and failure.

This paragraph caught the eye of a wealthy lady living in a neighbouring city. She hastened to New York and to the hospital, and stood by the bed of the poor old man.

In her fine, generous face he could not recognise the little girl he once befriended. But such she was. She had been educated by wealthy relations, had married well and lived in luxury. She had never forgotten her first benefactor, but had lost all traces of him until, to her surprise, she saw the paragraph in the papers.

And now the bread cast upon the waters had been found, after many days, gloriously multiplied, and, taken to the generous home of the noble woman, he passed his last days in peace and happiness, loved and honoured as her own father, and the children even called him grandpa.

PETER THE FISHERMAN.

In reading the history of Peter, we notice that the two graces which God wrought in him more especially were courage and faith, and yet we find the lion-hearted Peter cowardly, and the faithful Peter denying his Lord and Master.

The Bible shows us again and again that God's people often fail where we least expect them to fail. Thus Abraham, whose faith was so strong, failed in faith, and had a sad fall (Genesis 12). The sin recorded of the meek and gentle Moses, is that he spake unadvisedly with his lips, and of the patient Job, that he was impatient (Job 3. 1-3).

"Thou art Simon, the Son of Jona."

Are not these examples written for our learning? Do we not need to be constantly reminded that our hearts are deceitful, and that we must not trust to ourselves for a single moment, or we shall surely fall, and that our fallen nature is never safe from temptation?

The history of Peter is one of special interest to us all, for we know, alas! how much we are like him in his failings. It is comforting to notice the tender, wise, and loving way in which Jesus dealt with him, for we have to do with the same Saviour, who is ever ready to heal our backsliding, and "to guide our feet into the way of peace."

Whenever we are tempted or discouraged, let us remember that Jesus is "able to save us to the uttermost," and that He is praying for us.

Who was Peter? He was a fisherman, earning an uncertain livelihood upon the lake of Galilee. It was his brother Andrew who first brought him to Jesus. We hear very little more about Andrew, but a deal about Peter, and we know he was the means, in God's hand, of the conversion of many thousands of souls.

Andrew only spoke a few simple words about Jesus, but he spoke out of the fulness of his heart. We do not need any learning or eloquence to tell others what Jesus is, but we need to have our own hearts filled with His love, and to ask the Holy Spirit to tell us what to say. "He that winneth souls is wise."

It was when Peter was busy with his fishing that Jesus called him to be a disciple. Our daily work is no hindrance to our heavenly calling; whatever work God has given us to do let us do it cheerfully, and thus bring glory to Him.

We all know how Peter denied his Master; and do we not deny our Lord by our worldliness, and pride, and uncharitableness? What were the steps leading to Peter's fall? Pride, self-confidence, and the fear of man.

Do we not find these in our own hearts? When Peter was propping himself up with good resolutions, and boasting of his devotion to Christ, Satan was watching and plotting his downfall. When Peter wrote his Epistles afterwards, he wrote from sad experience. (See 1 Peter 5. 8.)

Can we not all look back upon good resolutions made, and soon broken? What do these broken resolutions teach us? They teach us that we have no strength of our own to resist sin, that the evil of our hearts is far too great for us to grapple with of ourselves, and that our only safety is to trust simply to Christ, day by day, and hour by hour, for power to overcome, and for grace to do right.

"To grow in grace" is not to feel better and stronger in ourselves, but it is to feel our own weakness and sinfulness more and more, and thus to depend wholly on Christ for everything. Let our daily prayer be "that we may be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man."

Louisa Clayton.

* * *

JESUS ON THE CROSS.

It was the Roman soldiers who crucified Jesus, though it was the Jews who procured it to be done. On such occasions, the clothes of the criminal became the property of those who executed the sentence; they were their perquisite.

The soldiers were four in number, a *quaternion*, as the Romans called it. Each took some piece of clothing as his share; but when they came to the inner garment, they were in a difficulty.

The inner garment, the "*coat*" or tunic, was a long dress, reaching from the neck to the feet. The natural course would have been to divide it; but this garment was all in one piece, without a seam, "woven from the top throughout:" it would have spoilt it to divide it, so they cast lots for it.

Hundreds of years before, in the 22nd Psalm, these words had been written, "They part My garments among them, and cast lots upon My vesture." Through all those years those words had remained in the Scriptures of the Jews, and now they were fulfilled exactly. They *did* part His garments, and cast lots for His vesture.

Not only in great things, but in lesser things too, all that was foretold of Him came true. No unbeliever or scoffer can say, "Oh, but it was done to *make* the words come true."

For it was not Jesus who did it, or His disciples or friends. What did these Roman soldiers know of that prophecy? Why should *they* care to fulfil it? The fulfilment is the more remarkable, that *both* these things were done. It was common to part the raiment; but it was *not* common to cast lots. Yet this also was foretold, and this was done.

At length the end came. Jesus knew that it was come. He had hung there for hours. He was athirst. When He said (it is only one word) "I thirst," did He only express the want that He felt? or did He purposely fulfil the prophecy of the sixty-ninth Psalm, "In My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink?" We cannot tell.

At all events, the prophecy *was* fulfilled. A vessel stood near, filled with the thin sour wine which the soldiers used to drink—called here vinegar. In this they dipped a bunch of hyssop (a plant with a long stalk), and raised it to His lips. He drank, said one word (for it is but one in the original), "It is finished"—then "bowed His head,—and gave up the ghost," breathed His last, *died.*

Yes, He was *dead.* It was finished. All was finished. His sufferings, His thirst, His weariness; the weight on His mind, the unknown inward struggle: but more, His atoning work, the sacrifice for sin, the redemption, the peace-making, the reconciliation; it was *finished.* His parting breath finished all. When He *died*, the debt was paid, the atonement was complete.

Finished! Nothing, in *this* way, left to be done. A finished work; and for *us.* Oh, that each one of us may have a share, through faith, in this finished work!

Rev. F. Bourdillon.

* * *

I WILL BE THEIR GOD.

Here is a deep sea of bliss, a shoreless ocean of delight. Come, bathe thy spirit in it; swim an age, and thou shalt find no shore; dive throughout eternity, and thou shalt find no bottom. "I will be their God."

If this do not make thine eyes sparkle, and thy heart beat high with bliss, then assuredly thy soul is not in a healthy state. This is the masterpiece of all the promises; its enjoyment makes a heaven below, and will make a heaven above. Dwell in the light of thy Lord, and let thy soul be always ravished with His love. Get out the marrow and fatness which this portion yields thee. Live up to thy privileges, and rejoice with unspeakable joy.

* * *

THE KNAVE AND THE FOOL.

The sun was setting, the breeze was hushed,
Not a leaf in the woods was stirring,
When slowly and softly a fierce wild cat
Up a tree came creeping and purring.

His green eyes glared with a hungry light,
And his cruel jaws were a-grin;
Said he to himself, "It is supper-time,
And I shall be glad to begin.

"For I know of a nest where the little ones
Are tender and plump," quoth he;
"One might almost think that the parent birds
Had been feeding them just for me.

"But everything that I do, of course,
Must be decently and in order;
A noise and a fuss would be sure to bring
Pert Magpie, the town recorder.

"And she would publish all that I did,
Adding her own opinions,
Till every creature had heard the news
Through the woodland's wide dominions.

"But greater things can be wrought by guile
Than with force, which often blunders;
As the silent lightning does more work
Than all the blustering thunders.

"And I have a tongue in flattery skilled,
So this shall now befriend me,
Since fortune favours my appetite,
And a quiet chance doth send me."

He climbed the fork, and crouching there,
He gazed at the mother bird;
Then spake in a soft and wheedling voice,
Smiling through every word.

"Oh, sad," quoth he, "that the sunlight fair
In the west has almost gone!
Full day is the time when you look your best,
You sweet Mrs. Wood Pi-geon.

"And yet your beauty's but half your charm,
Winged, witty, and winsome dame!
I am not alone in my thought of you,
For your friends all think the same.

"And even now, but a mile away,
In an elm tree fresh and green,
The birds are holding a great conclave
To settle who shall be queen.

"They hinted to me that they might elect
You queen of the whole bird-land.
Alas! they cannot decide at all,
For you have not joined their band."

"Dear me! dear me!" cooed the mother bird,
"I must really hurry away.
I'd like to be queen! Such luck, you know
Doesn't come to one every day."

She was gone; and the evil-minded beast
Crept on to the downy nest,
And munched the little birds every one,
The wings, and the legs, and the breast.

But scarce had he gobbled the last wee bone,
When a sharp report rang out,
And the murderer fell with a piercing yell,
That blent with the hunter's shout.

For knaves and fools, even here below,
Are punished by pain and strife,
As the credulous mother bird lost her chicks,
And the fierce wild cat his life.

AN INDIAN'S GIFT.

In a portion of the southern territory from which the red man has now been driven, I once attended a large protracted meeting held in the wild forest. The theme on which the preacher dwelt, and which he illustrated with surpassing beauty and grandeur, was "Christ and Him crucified."

He spoke of the Good Shepherd who came into the world to seek and to save the lost. He told how this Saviour met the rude buffetings of the heartless soldiers. He drew a picture of Gethsemane and the unbefriended Stranger who wept there. He pointed to Him as He hung bleeding upon the cross.

The congregation wept. Soon there was a slight movement in the assembly, and a tall son of the forest, with tears on his red cheeks, approached the pulpit and said, "Did Jesus die for me—die for poor Indian? Me have no lands to give to Jesus, the white man take them away; me give Him my dog and my rifle."

The minister told him Jesus could not accept those gifts. "Me give Jesus my dog, my rifle, and my blanket; poor Indian, he got no more to give—he give Jesus all." The minister replied that Christ could not accept them. The poor, ignorant, but generous child of the forest bent his head in sorrow and meditated. He raised his noble brow once more, and fixed his eye on the preacher, while he sobbed out,

"*Here is poor Indian, will Jesus have him?*"

A thrill of joy ran through the souls of minister and people as this fierce son of the wilderness now sat, in his right mind, at the feet of Jesus. The Spirit had done His work, and he who had been so poor, received the earnest of an inheritance which will not fade when the diadems of earth shall have mouldered for ever.

J. S. G.

"Go unto My brethren, and make known that as I said, so I this day have risen."

MARY AT THE TOMB ON EASTER MORN.

'Twas in the twilight of the early morn,
When three lone women took their silent way,
Leaving the inmates of their homes asleep,
Their paths converging toward a certain point,
Where with kind salutations now they meet.

The day before was holy sabbath day,
And they had rested from all worldly toil,
According to Jehovah's strict command.

The beauteous Paschal moon had sunk from view,
And in the east, light did but faintly gleam,
As through the streets of old Jerusalem
(Which at that hour did look both weird and grim)
They took their way upon a mission sad,
And as they thought they talked in tones subdued
Of a loved Friend, from whom they had hoped much,
Who had on Preparation Day been slain;
By wicked hands had been nailed to a cross,
Whose dear dead form was placed in Joseph's tomb,
And as they went the tears of grief flowed on.

Within their hands sweet spices each one bore,
For the anointing of their precious Lord.
Now they remember that a mighty stone
Was placed against the opening of the tomb;
And wondering now each to the other said,
"Who will for us the heavy stone remove?"

With sacred awe they reach the holy place;
The sun's first rays shone o'er the eastern hills,
And tinged with rays of lights the fleecy clouds,
Until the very heaven seemed burnished gold.

As they drew near they saw the open door,
For mighty angel had rolled back the stone,
By earthquake jarred before the dawn of day;
With trembling limbs they enter through the door,
And then descend into the sepulchre,
Expecting there His rigid form to see.
But ah! they saw Him not (for He had risen),
Instead two men in shining robes appeared;
Then sore amazement seized each trembling soul.

And while they stood with faces bowed to earth,
The angel said in reassuring tones:
"Why seek ye here the living 'mongst the dead?
He is not here; come see the place He lay.
Remember how He told you of these things,
And now go quickly, His disciples tell
That He indeed is risen from the dead."

Then they departed quickly with great joy,
And ran to tell His loved disciples all.
Then John and Peter hastened to the tomb,
And found it even as they had been told.
But they the Scriptures did not understand,
That He from death to life must rise again,
So to their homes in haste they went away.

But Mary Magdalene still weeping stayed,
And, stooping down, she gazed into the tomb,
And saw the angels sitting in the place
At head and foot of where the Lord had lain.
They said to her, "Woman, why weepest thou?"
She said, "Because my Lord they have removed."

When Mary turned about she saw a man,
But that it was her Lord she did not know,
E'en when He talked with her she knew Him not,
Until He gently called her by her name.
Then quick as thought she knew her blessed Lord,
And would have seized and kissed His nail-scarred feet,
But Jesus said unto her, "Touch Me not:
But go unto My brethren, and make known
That as I said, so I this day have risen."

From that bright Easter morn until this time,
'Most nineteen hundred years have intervened,
And year by year, His saints with joyfulness
Have kept one day as a memorial feast,
To keep in mind earth's brightest gladdest day.

And it is fitting that it should be so;
For if our blessed Lord had never risen,
Where then had been our faith? It had been vain.
So with glad hearts we keep this festal day,
While with sweet songs we fill His holy courts.

Let sweetest music lend its charms to-day,
Let lute and harp send forth their melodies,
And let the grand old organ's tones sublime
Be mingled with our grateful songs of praise.
Oh! let our prayers like holy incense rise,
As a sweet savour to our great High Priest;
For He on Calvary did yield His life
That sinful man from death might be redeemed.

For us He entered Joseph's rock-hewn tomb,
For us, Death's mighty power He broke in twain,
And led him captive at His sovereign will.
And through His resurrection we have hope
And faith most strong that we shall also rise.
Then let us follow bravely in the path
Marked out by Him who rose again for us,
E'en though each footprint should be stained with blood,
And strewn with thorns like those that pierced His brow.

Jane Pardon.

THINGS WORTH KNOWING.

VEGETABLES should be laid in water for some time before they are cooked, that all dirt and insects may be drawn out of them. It is a mistake to put salt in the water, as that kills the insects where they lie on the inner leaves, but if clear pure water is used they will crawl to the outer surface, where they may readily be seen when they are washed, and thus be removed.

Be sure you have the water boiling when green vegetables are put in, and make it boil fast. Do not cover them closely. If the water is kept boiling fast you may know when they are done, as they will sink, then take them up immediately. A piece of common soda about the size of a cracking nut, and a tablespoonful of salt, should be added to the water, as these help to keep the vegetables a good colour. In districts where the water is naturally soft the soda is best omitted.

Peas.—Peas are almost the only green vegetable that should be boiled in a small quantity of water, nor suffered to boil too fast. Mint and a little salt should be boiled with them.

Stewed Green Peas.—Put a quart of peas, a lettuce cut up, an onion well sliced, a piece of butter the size of a walnut, and a little pepper and salt into a saucepan, but put no more water than hangs round the lettuce as it is cut up. Set the saucepan at the side of the fire, and stew very gently for two hours. Just before serving, beat up an egg and stir into them, or a little flour and butter. Add a little chopped mint about an hour before it is done. A little gravy may also be added, but then there will be less of the flavour of the peas.

To Stew Old Peas.—Soak them in water all night if very old, but if not, half an hour before boiling will do. Put them into water just enough to cover them, with a piece of butter the size of a walnut, or a piece of beef or pork might be boiled with them to advantage; stew them very gently till the peas are soft, and the meat tender. This may take an hour or even more. If the meat is not salt, or butter is used, add a little salt and pepper. Serve them round the meat with a little of the liquor for gravy.

Artichokes.—Trim a few of the outside leaves off, and cut the stalk even, if young; half an hour will cook them. They are better for being gathered two or three days before they are cooked. Serve with melted butter.

To Stew Onions—Peel six large onions, fry gently to a fine brown, taking care that they do not burn or blacken; then put them into a small saucepan, sprinkle with flour, add a little weak gravy, pepper and salt, and stew them gently for two hours.

Roast Onions.—These should be done with all the skins on, to keep the juice in. They can be eaten alone with a little salt and butter, or with roast potatoes or beetroot. Roast onions eaten by way of supper are an excellent remedy for a cold on the chest.

To Stew Celery.—This is considered such an excellent remedy for rheumatism now, that for those subject to this ailment, it should form a frequent dish when in season. Wash and strip off the outer leaves; cut each head in halves lengthwise, and cut into lengths of about four inches. Put them into a saucepan with a cup of broth or weak gravy, stew till tender, then add a little flour and butter. Season with pepper, salt, and nutmeg, and simmer all together for five minutes.

To Boil Potatoes.—Every one is supposed to know how to cook potatoes; but to do them properly, so as to save all waste and yet have the potatoes good, it is not such a simple process as some suppose. The best way is to put them on to boil in cold water without paring them. Let them simmer for a little while, so as to be about half done; then put in some salt and more cold water. Let them boil again until almost done. Pour off the water and put a clean cloth over them, and then the lid, and let them stand on the hob near the fire for the steam to finish them; then peel and serve. By this method the potatoes will not go all to pieces and so get spoiled, as they so often do, but may be peeled and served whole. As different kinds of potatoes require a longer or shorter time to boil, no specified time can be given, but it may be roughly estimated at from half to three quarters of an hour to prepare them in this way.

To Broil Potatoes.—This is a favourite method in many Irish families. Parboil the potatoes first with their skins on, then set them on a gridiron over a slow fire. Moderate sized potatoes should be chosen for this. They are eaten from their skins, served with a little salt and butter.

To Stew Carrots.—Half boil the carrots first, then scrape and slice them into a saucepan; add a cupful of any broth or gravy, or a little milk with a piece of butter the size of a small nut, and simmer them until they are tender, but not broken. A little flour should be sprinkled over them just before they are done, and a little chopped parsley may be added if it is liked. This is a good way of warming up any carrots that may have been left from the previous day's dinner.

A Staffordshire Dish.—Clean and drain a good quantity of spinach leaves, two large handfuls of parsley, and a handful of spring onions. Crop the parsley and onions and sprinkle among the spinach, set them all on to stew with some salt and a piece of butter the size of a walnut. Shake the saucepan well as it gets hot, and let it be closely covered and only stand on the hob near the fire, or the juices of the vegetables will be dried up, and the whole spoiled. Let it stew till tender. It should be served with slices of liver and bacon or eggs fried, and is a very tasty dish. Turnip-tops may be used instead of spinach with almost equal advantage.

To Stew Red Cabbage.—Cut up a small red cabbage or half a large one, wash it well and put it into a saucepan with pepper, salt, a piece of butter the size of a walnut, but no more water than clings about the cabbage. Stew till tender, and just before serving add two or three spoonfuls of vinegar, and just let it boil; then turn it out quickly. This is a nice dish with sausages or a slice of ham served on it.

AN ACCOUNT AT THE SHOP.

THE table was spread for tea in Thomas Eliot's cottage, and Rose Eliot was moving busily about, making little preparations for her husband's return, so as to give an air of pleasant comfort to the home. An elderly widow, Rose's mother, sat knitting near the fire; and two children, a boy of nine, and a girl about seven years of age, were playing with each other and with the cat. Presently Rose said, "There is not sugar enough for tea; Jessie, go to Armstrong's and get a pound; and when you are there you may as well bring a pound of cheese; father likes a bit with his tea."

The child disappeared, and very quickly returned.

"Mrs. Armstrong says we can't have anything more till last fortnight's things are paid off. She says you promised to pay it all off last Saturday night, and you only sent her five shillings."

"Well, it was all I could spare," said Rose, sharply; "go back and tell her I haven't any money in the house; and if she can't accommodate me, I must go somewhere else."

"But, mother, Mrs. Ward paid you half-a-crown this afternoon for washing," said Jessie; "can't you send that?"

"A very likely thing, that I am going to leave myself without a penny!" said her mother. "Just you go and say what I bid you; and don't forget to say I must go somewhere else; that'll soon make her civil, I'll warrant!"

Jessie, who was a bright quick child, seemed quite to understand her mission, and went off again to the shop. Then her brother, who had been watching the proceedings, came forward, and, after fumbling a little while in his pocket, produced two eggs carefully wrapped in paper—

"Will you boil these for tea, mother?" he said, rather hesitatingly.

"Wherever have you got them, Charley?"

"Out of the hedge at the bottom of Will Jones's paddock, mother. Some of Jones's hens lay away; I watched this one, and there were two eggs in the nest. Nobody saw me, for where I found them is a good bit off the house."

All the time Charley spoke, his eyes were fixed doubtfully on his mother's face: it was evidently the first time he had acknowledged an action like this, and he was watching anxiously for the effect on her.

But he need have had no fear; she only said with a laugh, "Well, you can walk that way another time: a fresh-laid egg is quite a treat. But keep a sharp look out, for Will Jones would give you a good thrashing if he caught you."

Just then Jessie returned in triumph with the sugar and cheese; and Thomas Eliot coming in, they all sat down to tea.

After tea he lighted his pipe and strolled outside the door; the children also left the kitchen, and Rose and her mother were alone. The old woman had taken no part in the conversation at tea, nor in the previous talk with the children; but now she laid down her knitting and took off her spectacles, and looked at her daughter.

"Rose," she said, solemnly, "have you ever thought what you are doing with those children?"

"What do you mean, mother?" asked Rose, startled by her manner.

"It is cruel work, Rose," the old woman went on. "Those children are in your power, and you can teach them anything you like; and you are teaching them to lie and steal—such fine children as they are, too!

"And you, their own mother, that ought to wish them well, are trying how much like the devil you can make them, for he is the father of lies! You must not think I am speaking harshly, Rose; but it cuts me up sadly to find things as they are.

"I had brought you up so carefully and respectably; and when your father died, and you and Thomas asked me to come and live with you, I thought I should have a bit of comfort in my old age."

"I'm sure it is our wish that you should be comfortable, mother," said Rose; "but it will never do for you to put yourself out at every little thing. It is none so easy to keep children right; and I don't believe in being over strict."

"It is no use trying to keep children right at all, Rose," said her mother, "unless you keep yourself right first; and that is what makes me trouble so that you have begun with that bad plan of getting credit at the shop. I thought you had a spirit above it, Rose, brought up as you were, for you know it is not fairly honest."

"I only do what everybody else does," said Rose.

"Yes; I know that, and it makes me wish to see my girl setting them a better example. You're a good daughter, Rose, and I know you would do your old mother a kindness if you could; and I ask it as a favour that you will begin at once to clear off the account at Armstrong's. I can knit, and help you to wash, and in many ways earn a penny; and out of Thomas's wages I think you might lay by five shillings a week to pay it off."

"I don't see how I could manage that," said Rose.

"Well, then, let you and me and the children go without butter and sugar until you are straight in the world," said her mother, eagerly; "it is not a good plan, Rose, depend upon it, to let children be too fond of good eating and drinking."

"You are thinking of the eggs," said Rose; "well, I'm very sorry about that now. I know I oughtn't to have let Charley bring the eggs home; but I am far too easy, and don't give things a thought."

"But you would give it a thought, Rose, if you saw somebody take a red-hot iron and stamp it on Charley's arm!"

"I should think so!" said Rose, opening her eyes.

"And, Rose, every time you encourage the children in sin, the devil is branding their souls with an ugly scar, which, in the sight of God, is far more frightful than the most dreadful wound would be in yours. But I won't say any more just now, only to advise you to speak to Charley about stealing, and Jessie about telling lies, confessing your own sin in both matters, and praying to the Saviour to help you to train those children right. He says, 'Suffer the little children to come unto Me;' and if you bring them to Him, He will be well pleased!"

Mrs. France.

THE SLAVER CAUGHT.

How hard it is for us to understand how our forefathers could allow such a brutal thing as the slave trade! Wretched negroes, living in Africa, were torn away from their homes, driven like beasts down to the coast, and then were shipped off to the West Indies. There they were sold that they might be used in the cultivation of the estates belonging to Englishmen. One marvels how such abominable injustice and cruelty were sanctioned for a single moment. At last, however, the day came when it was condemned, and an Act of Parliament made it penal for any man to be caught engaged in this traffic.

But such a paying affair as the slave trade was not a thing that could be stopped simply by an Act of Parliament. What cared the ruffians who carried on the trade for Acts of Parliament? Nothing would stop them but being compelled to do so by force. Accordingly, swift sailing ships of the Royal Navy were stationed near the West Indies, ready to overhaul any ship that looked like a "Slaver."

One day, in the year 1799, the Government ship *Sparrow* brought a large brig into the harbour of Kingston, Jamaica. Suspecting her to be a slave ship, the captain of the *Sparrow* boarded her and searched for proofs that she had been used in the abominable trade; but though he saw much that strengthened his suspicions, he could find no papers to prove the accusation. The Court at Kingston therefore discharged the captain of the suspected ship.

But before he could set sail and get away another man-of-war arrived. The sailors of this war-ship had been amusing themselves a few days back in fishing for sharks. One was caught, dragged up on deck, and there cut open. In its stomach was found a bundle of ship's papers. These the captain had cleaned, as he was curious to know how the shark had come by them. They turned out to be the papers of the slave-ship, and which her captain had thrown overboard when he found the *Sparrow* sailing down upon him. On the strength of those papers the captain was convicted, and his ship destroyed.

If ever a man felt safe from detection, it must have been that captain. His papers were the only things that could *prove* he was engaged in the slave trade. These papers he throws with his own hand into the ocean hundreds of miles away from shore, so that there was no fear of their being thrown up by the tide. Probably, he saw the shark dash at them as they fell, and then he would feel doubly safe. Papers swallowed by a shark in the middle of the ocean appeared to be as safe from ever being found as papers could be. And yet they did turn up again, and at the very time, too, when he did not want them to.

I know of no better illustration of those words, "Be sure your sin will find you out!" We flatter ourselves that we can hide things, and can have secrets which nobody can ever find out. But that is simply impossible. Christ Himself has plainly told us, "There is *nothing* covered that shall not be revealed, and hid that shall not be known."

Nothing! Then there is not a single secret but that some day will be made known—not a single mystery but that will some day be cleared up and thoroughly exposed. We can hide things from our fellow-men, but we can hide *nothing* from God. "Thou hast set our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance" are the words of Scripture. Yes, the very things we think are hidden, God puts right in front of Him. And there we shall find them just when we do not want them. There they will confront us on that day when we have ourselves to stand in front of God.

THE BLIND MEN AND THE ELEPHANT.

They were six men of Hindostan,
To learning much inclined,
Who went to see the elephant
(Though all of them were blind),
That each by observation
Might satisfy his mind.

The first approached the elephant,
And happening to fall
Against his broad and sturdy side,
At once began to bawl,
"Why, bless me! but the elephant
Is very like a wall!"

The second, feeling o'er the tusk,
Cried "Ho! what have we here
So very round, and smooth and sharp?
To me 'tis very clear
This wonder of an elephant
Is very like a spear!"

The third approached the animal,
And happening to take
The squirming trunk within his hands,
Thus boldly up he spake:
"I see," quoth he, "the elephant
Is very like a snake!"

The fourth reached out his eager hand,
And felt about the knee;
"What this most wondrous beast is like
Is very plain," quoth he;
"'Tis clear enough the elephant
Is very like a tree!"

The fifth, who chanced to touch the ear
Said, "E'en the blindest man
Can tell what this resembles most;
Deny the fact who can,
This marvel of an elephant
Is very like a fan!"

The sixth no sooner had begun
About the beast to grope,
Than, seizing on the swinging tail
That fell within his scope,
"I see," quoth he, "the elephant
Is very like a rope!"

And so these men of Hindostan
Disputed loud and long,
Each in his own opinion
Exceeding stiff and strong,
Though each was partly in the right
And all were in the wrong!

So, oft in theologic wars,
The disputants, I ween,
Rail on in utter ignorance
Of what each other mean,
And prate about an elephant
Not one of them has seen!

PRIDE MUST HAVE A FALL.

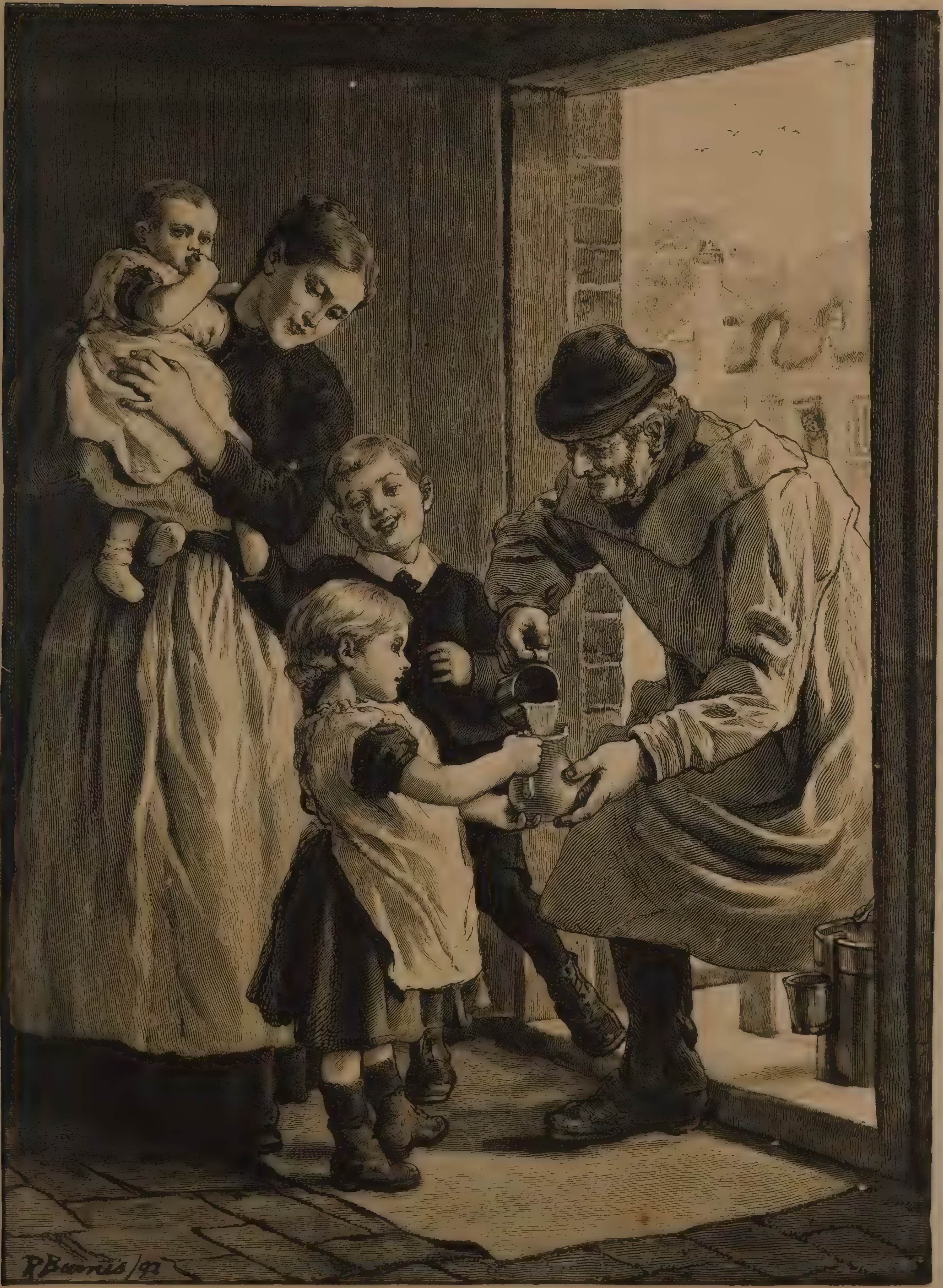
"What are you doing, you upstart things?"
Said Cock-a-doodle-doo,
"I'm not to be frightened out of my wits
By such silly chits as you.

Do you think a noble bird like me
Can so soon be put about?"
And he tossed his head and yet further said—
"Does your mother know you're out?"

"Be still, or I'll have a bit of your tail,"
Was the answer, saucy too;
Then oh! how he scuffled with feathers ruffled,
Poor Cock-a-doodle-do!

He fled for his life—he and his wife
E'en from two puppies small:—
Learn readers, then, from cock and hen,
That pride must have a fall!

M. K. M.



HOW CAREFUL JOHN WAS TO GIVE FULL MEASURE!

JOHN ASHBROOK'S FORTUNE.

You could hardly find in England, or, for that matter, in any country, a prettier picture than Garsworth Park shows you at milking-time in summer. The Park can hardly be surpassed for beauty, and, to go round it, you must prepare for a nine miles' walk.

When the grand trees are in their summer glory, and the sun, shining through the branches, makes ever-changing lights and shadows on the grass, the picture is worth a long journey to look at.

People do travel great distances for the pleasure of a day at Garsworth, and all who are contented to enjoy and not destroy its beauties can go about without let or hindrance. There is so much to please town-bred folk—the wonderful trees; the deer herding beneath them; groups of sheep, especially those beautiful spotted ones called "Jacob's flock"; the bonny, sleek cows; and the groups of holiday-makers enjoying the pure air and sunshine—all charm the sight in turn. Garsworth Park has not one picture to show, but ever-changing beauties in all directions.

The cows mostly belong to cottagers, who pay for "ley," or pasturage, in the Park for several months; and surely, if the animals could choose, they would wish to graze there. Most of the morning's milk is sent off by early train to town, but none goes that has been yielded by John Ashbrook's three cows—Molly, Nanny and Betty.

"Why don't you send your milk by train, John?" asked stout Farmer Mellor. "You 'd make more money, and you could do with it."

"Aye, Mr. Mellor, you 're right there. But how would the little Garsworth bairns do without the milk?"

"Number One comes first, John."

"But you mustn't stop at Number One too long, or you 'll stick there altogether. So much milk goes from the villages to feed the big towns, that it 's often harder to get a jug of it fresh from the cow for the little folks on the farms than anywhere else. John Ashbrook's morning's milk is for his little Garsworth neighbours, God bless them!"

"Stupid old fellow that! No wonder he had to leave his big farm, and come down to a cottage and a few acres. He 's just as pig-headed now, and won't be taught by one that knows. A wilful man must have his way. John Ashbrook pays for his whim," was the judgment of the prosperous farmer.

Farmer Mellor drove off to put his profits into the bank a little later in the day, and John Ashbrook went on his round with a contented look on his rugged face. It gladdened his kind heart to see the little folks clap their hands as he came in sight, or flock to the door, jug in hand, to take the milk.

Sometimes a tiny girl was allowed to hold the vessel whilst John emptied the measure into it, and mother would smile down at her little maiden who was so proud to be trusted.

How careful John Ashbrook was to give full measure. If by chance a little were spilled in pouring, through the unsteadiness of small hands, down went the measure for more than had been lost. Or if some wistful watcher, who held no vessel to be filled, looked longingly on, John would bid the child run for a cup, and, having poured in some milk, say, "Drink it, dearie. It will do you good."

"You give away all your profits, I doubt, John," some neighbour would say, with a shake of the head.

"I shall be no poorer for giving it. Only a drop now and then for the little ones," John would answer aloud. But as he moved onward he would think, "Only the little ones. But the Master, *my Master*, loved them when He was on earth. I can't give them much nowadays, but He spoke of the cup of cold water given for His sake. The milk is better for the children, and whilst John Ashbrook lives they shall have a free cup now and again, and may God bless them all."

The morning round, from door to door, was a pretty picture, but afternoon milking-time in the Park must not be forgotten. At five o'clock the milkers went in numbers down the path, with pails on their arms and stools in their hands. The cows would be gathering at the accustomed place near the entrance, for they knew milking-time as well as their owners.

Holiday-makers trooped towards the spot to buy the rich new milk for their town-bred children, and many who did not want to purchase looked at the scene with smiling faces.

When John Ashbrook and his comely wife went to the Park three cows that had been on the watch were sure to race towards them, and much patting and many gentle words were bestowed on the creatures.

These, however, were not all. Nanny's soft lips would seek the mistress's hand and the other two followed, dividing their attentions between her and John. The kindly couple always carried a few bits of linseed-cake for the cows, and these were like expectant children, and pushed eagerly forward for the accustomed dainty.

"Don't be greedy, Polly; Betty must have her turn," John would say, as he gently put Polly's head aside to give the others a chance. No hard word, no blow from a stick; the law of kindness was the rule with him and his wife, and it was their pleasure to say that no child of their training had ever been known to ill-treat a dumb animal.

It was not often that the owner of Garsworth—"the Duke," as everybody called him—was seen near the milkers, though he often went to-and-fro in the Park, plainly dressed, unknown and unnoticed by the many visitors who enjoyed its beauties.

One day, however, he saw with some amusement the meeting between the Ashbrooks and their animals. A gamekeeper was near, and the Duke spoke to him—

"How kind those people are to their cows!" he said. "I seem to know the man's face, but I cannot remember his name. I certainly have seen a person like him, but he was in a different position."

"John Ashbrook was better off once, sir. He had Moor Hill Farm, where his father and grandfather lived before him; but he has come down in the world, and now has a cottage and a few acres only."

"He does not look like a drinker; how did the change come about?" asked the Duke, looking interested.

"He is a steady and a good man, sir, and was one of the kindest and best of masters. I was on his farm as a lad. He had a son that went wrong—got to racing and gambling—and his father ruined himself to save his lad. Young John went to Australia, and the parents left Moor Hill, after paying every penny of his debts. They never complained. I think they keep a brave face, and work and wait, hoping to see their lad back some day."

"Thank you, Jarvis; I am much interested; I thought I knew that face." And the Duke walked away, but not to forget what he had heard.

Three days later John Ashbrook was amazed to receive a letter in the Duke's own handwriting, in which he was requested to call at the great house on the following afternoon.

He obeyed the summons, and was most kindly received by the Duke, who asked him many questions, the last of which was, "Would you like to return to Moor Hill Farm? It will soon be vacant."

At the question John Ashbrook's face lighted with pleasure, but the light soon faded again.

"If it could be, your Grace," he said, "I should be happy indeed, but I have no money to stock a farm now."

"But I have, John Ashbrook; will you borrow from me?"

"No, sir; I cannot thank you enough, but I am too old to begin again with borrowed money. You are very good; but, thank God, we have bread enough, and we owe no man anything. Debt would weigh me to the ground."

"Think about it my friend. Ask your wife. Don't be in a hurry, I 'll make things easy for you. See me to-morrow," said the Duke, and sent his visitor away with a shake of the hand.

On the morrow John Ashbrook paid his second visit to Garsworth House, and his face shone with happiness.

"How about Moor Hill, John?" asked the Duke.

"I am ready to take it, your Grace, and thank you."

"I thought you would change your mind when you had talked things over with your wife. Now how much money am I to lend you?"

"It was not the wife, and I shall want no money now, thank you all the same."

"Why? Has some one left you a fortune?"

"Better than that, your Grace. My boy has come back. When he went away he said, 'Father, if God spares me health and strength, and hard work will do it, I 'll pay my debt so far as money can, and the love and gratitude I feel shall do the rest. I shall never be happy till you are back in your old home.'

"John has kept his word. God has given me back my son, a better man than he was when he left me, and we are ready for Moor Hill as soon as it is ready for us. I can truly say I have come into a great fortune."

Needless to say that the Duke rejoiced with his old tenant, and when the news got abroad, Garsworth folks, young and old, were glad also, and with all their hearts asked God's blessing on the Ashbrooks, and long life and prosperity under the roof-tree of Moor Hill Farm for its old tenants.

Ruth Lamb.

OLD JOHNNY APPLESEED.

ONE of the quaintest, queerest, and most original characters that ever trod the trackless wastes of the western wildernesses was Jonathan Chapman, known as old Johnny Appleseed. Pioneer, philosopher, and philanthropist was he, taking no thought of himself, and living for others only. He would not, could he prevent it, suffer the slightest harm to be done to the meanest of living creatures.

In the great western solitudes he led the life of the primitive Christian, taking a thought only of the hour, and letting a wise Providence look out for the future. He thought hunting morally wrong, and he would let a mosquito sit on him and suck his blood until the insect was satisfied to bursting!

This old man was the pioneer orchard planter of the west. For over twenty years he wandered over the states of Indiana, Ohio, Illinois, and Missouri, planting apple seeds, and selling and giving away the seedlings. Many of the great apple orchards of the west owe their origin to Johnny Appleseed. Old Johnny was born in Boston in 1775. In 1801 he appeared in the territory of Ohio with a load of apple seeds, which he planted in several places.

The early western pioneers who knew him but slightly considered old Johnny a vagabond. At first sight it would appear that their views were pretty well founded. A more uncouth individual it would be difficult to find. His garments were a bundle of rags. His shoes, when he wore any, could scarcely be held on his feet by bits of twine, so dilapidated and worn were they. His pinched and grizzled features were covered by a growth of very shaggy beard. His hair was quite long and very much faded by constant exposure to wind and weather.

But old Johnny's crowning glory was a tin saucepan that had a long handle. This battered old culinary utensil he wore for a hat. When he was tramping through the western forests the old man always cooked his meals in the old saucepan. The craving of hunger satisfied, he would give the pot a careful washing, put it on his head, and tramp on. This was his practice for over twenty years. The old pot was bright enough on its inside, but its exterior was a sight to behold, so blackened and battered was it.

With all his uncouthness, however, old Johnny Appleseed had an intellect as keen as the most polished scholars of the day. His ideas were far in advance of his time. Those who saw the old man say that he was a philosopher whose thoughts were as pure, and whose life was as simple as that of a child. One person calls him the "John in the Wilderness" of the New World.

The name, Johnny Appleseed, was given him by the early settlers with whom he came in contact, because he nearly always carried a bag of appleseeds with him. These seeds by infinite toil he gathered from the cider presses among the Dutch farmers in Pennsylvania. Frequently the daughters and wives of the farmers would assist him in his task, but most of the time he pursued his work alone.

When a sufficient quantity of the seeds had been gathered, old Johnny would load the fruit of his labour in a canoe and start on a voyage down the Ohio River into the great wilderness of the west. In Indiana and Illinois, wherever there was the faintest suspicion of a settlement, he went and planted his apple seeds. Sometimes he would select an open place in the forest, his judgment telling him that some day the white man would be there.

The discovery of fruit-bearing apple-trees in the woods in these states has led many to believe that the apples are indigenous to the soil. When Indiana and Illinois became well settled, old Johnny extended his wanderings west of the Mississippi River and planted his apple-seeds on Missouri soil. In the wigwam of the Indian and the cabin of the pioneer he was known and always welcome. He must have made twenty such annual trips as the one above described.

When his seedlings became large enough, he gave them to the settlers or sold them for food and clothes. He generally made a sorry bargain, the garments he got being of the very poorest variety. During the summer he almost always travelled barefooted. One enthusiastic historian says that the old man even travelled barefooted when snow was on the ground.

One of the most peculiar characteristics of old Johnny Appleseed was his religion. He led a simple, moral, and harmless life. He never lost an opportunity to expound his doctrines. He carried with him always a little bundle of tracts. These he distributed among the early settlers on the border of civilisation. When he would make his return trips he would take these tracts up and leave new ones in their places.

His advent in Ohio in the early days created a sensation. The simple-minded people of the towns and villages knew nothing but the old faith, and their belief was strong in superstition. The new doctrines of the long-haired old pilgrim with a saucepan for a hat taught them to turn from the old paths of bigotry and superstition. The settlers could not understand his religious views. Some thought he was crazy, and therefore treated him with compassion; others thought he was possessed of a devil, and would not allow him to enter their houses. At this time, however, a school teacher, and the best read man in the county, invited the strange pilgrim to his home. The Ohioan said afterwards that he found his guest to be one of the best posted and most brilliant-minded persons that he had ever had the pleasure of meeting.

One time old Johnny was cutting some prairie grass with a scythe near the house of one of the settlers. By some means he disturbed a snake and the snake bit him. He dropped the scythe and ran to the house, but of more moment to him than his injury was his fear that he had cut the snake with his scythe. He would not be contented until some one went to see if the snake was wounded. He said that the reptile would not have bit him if he had not stepped upon it.

Once, however, the old man was forced to put aside his sentiment in regard to injuring animals and fight for his life. He was frequently lost in the wilderness. On one of these occasions he came face to face with a black bear. The animal was on mischief bent, and at sight of the old saucepan-bedecked pilgrim it rose on its hind legs and advanced toward him, evidently anticipating an easy victory, and a good meal.

In self-defence old Johnny picked up a long pole and advanced to the fight valiantly. At every blow that Bruin received, however, the pole broke. Finally it was but three or four feet long, and the old man was in despair. However, by the help of the Lord, he said, he eventually slew the animal, had a good supper, and carried one quarter and the hide into the next settlement.

The old man was never known to be sick. He would sleep on the floor, and, if no better food could be had, he would be satisfied with the scraps that were usually thrown to the dogs. He was very fond of children, and he always carried presents for them. These were generally bits of bright calico and ribbon or Indian trinkets, but the children of the early settlers prized the gifts highly. However hungry, he would never partake of food until he was assured that there was enough for every child of the family.

A person who knew him says that his death was a triumphant passing into glory. He lay on the grass with his face toward the setting sun. His countenance was wreathed with smiles of rapture, and as the last beams of the sun died out of the west the vital spark left its abode of flesh and passed into the great unknown.

VISIT TO AN OPTICAL INSTRUMENT FACTORY.

TOWARDS the end of the last century, the Lutheran clergyman of Rathenow was one August Duncker. He was, like many Lutheran clergymen, poor; he had a strong bent for mechanics, and he felt that if he could not emulate some ministers by making a spectacle of himself, he could make spectacles for others.

At that time the only place where spectacles were made in Germany was Nuremberg. The glasses were cast in moulds by workmen who knew little of optics, and sold over the country by pedlars and hawkers who knew less; and if a man chanced to get a pair that suited him, he might think himself happy, and as often as not, his glasses made him see worse than before.

Good old Pastor Duncker, besides being poor, was very deaf; but this he turned to an advantage, for he could think and think over his plans without being disturbed. After innumerable trials and failures he at last constructed a machine for grinding glasses. He sent his lenses up to the scientific men at Berlin, and the scientific men told him they were well and properly ground.

Then in the year 1800, Duncker, with the help of an army chaplain named Wagner, started this optical manufactory. In the attics of the parsonage, the soldiers' orphan children ground the glasses for Parson Duncker. The Prussian Government encouraged the business, and lent some money to enlarge it; but in 1806 came the war with Napoleon, and the

Grinding Machine for Convex Lenses.

ruin of Prussia, and the number of Duncker's workmen sank to six. Not till 1815, when Waterloo put an end to Napoleon's mischief, did the pastor's workshop hold thirty workmen. To-day, all told, full 5,000 persons at Rathenow live by making glasses.

For the business grew, and one workshop after another sprang up. But thanks to Duncker's nephew, and other good men, the old optical manufactory is still the most famous of them all.

Rathenow is a pleasant old town, with pretty new villas clustering round it. It looks prosperous, but quiet—busy, but not too busy, like some good old-established bank or place of business that has made its name and won its custom, and has only to keep both.

The manufacture of optical instruments is carried on mostly in factories; but there is a good deal of home work, chiefly on spectacle frames. In the large factories, steam power and machinery are used for everything; but the little workshops have plenty to do. But though the work at home requires little strength, very few women and no children are engaged in it. Strange! Pastor Duncker started his workshop largely to give occupation to children, and now not a child is allowed to work at spectacle-making.

How is a pair of spectacles made? Well, one thing you may be pretty sure of—the "optician" of whom you buy your glasses has not made them; he can make his profit out of them, he can tell you (sometimes) what kind to use, he can mend them if broken—but he gets glasses and frames ready-made from a wholesale manufacturer.

The frame is the first thing to think of—gold, silver, aluminium, nickel, or steel, in a dozen or more shapes; this is simple enough to make. It is just cutting, bending, welding the metal, the bridge, the oval frames for the glasses, the side pieces; and a good workman will put them together so quickly that you can hardly follow him.

Far more interesting is the manufacture of the glasses. A spectacle lens is a regularly-ground piece of glass, one of whose sides, at least, is curved. The properties of such glasses were known even in ancient times, for we are told that the short-sighted Emperor Nero used a ground emerald as an eyeglass.

Examining Lenses with Magnifying Glass.

But the invention of spectacles, generally ascribed to Alexander of Spina, comes about the end of the thirteenth century; and the first authentic account of the "lately discovered glasses, called spectacles, a real blessing for poor old men with weak sight," is in the year 1299.

For a long time spectacle glasses were ground one by one by hand, and even now lenses of specially short focal length have to be made in this way, and so cost more than the others; but all other lenses have for long been made in batches by most ingenious machinery.

The raw material of the lenses comes to the factory as ordinary sheets of plate-glass. The large plates are then cut up into smaller and more handy sizes, and the workman cuts out of these with a simple but ingenious machine, the rough shape of the lens, oval or round. The little shining glass discs, heaped up round him, are taken to the grinding room.

The special point of the lens-grinding manufactories is that a whole batch of glasses of the same curvature and focal length can be turned out at once; this is done by the grinding-wheel. On a metal hemisphere of fixed diameter, about the size of a child's head, eight or ten or more flat lenses are fastened with pitch. Then if now a second hollow mould of the same fixed diameter is laid on the first, with water and emery powder between, and both slightly pressed together, revolve in opposite directions, it is clear that every one of the lenses will be gradually ground down till it exactly fits a part of the curved surface of the grinding-wheel. Of course, for convex lenses, hollow moulds are used; for concave lenses, projecting bosses.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

AN ARM TO LEAN ON.

"If you left me, I should fall."

"JAMES," said my grandfather, as he took his hand from my shoulder, upon which it had been resting, and sat down under the shade of a large elm tree, "James, when I was your age I little thought that I should ever have to lean on a grandson for support. *Then* I used to run about these fields and lanes as nimbly as you do; but now time has wonderfully altered me.

"Well I remember the time when I was able to leap across yonder stream, or vault a five-barred gate; it seems but as yesterday when I was a boy like you—nimble, and active, and strong, and as full of fun as you are now; but all has changed—now I can hardly walk from the house to this seat without help, and soon I shall pass away and be laid in the churchyard with many who have gone before me.

"Don't cry, my dear boy" (for the tears had come into my eyes), "I do not dread that time, I rather look forward to it with feelings of pleasure, for I know that when my body is laid in the earth, my spirit will be with God my Saviour.

"Do you know how it is I feel happy even at the thought of death? I will tell you. Just now I was leaning on you for support, and if you had suddenly left me I should have fallen to the ground. So, all my life through I have been leaning on One who is stronger than man, and who has said, 'I will not fail thee nor forsake thee' (Josh. 1. 5).

"If I had not leaned upon Him I could not feel as I do now. There is something awe-inspiring in the thought that soon, very soon, I shall leave the scenes I know and love so well; but those feelings are nothing in comparison with the knowledge of the joy that awaits me: 'death is swallowed up in victory.'

"Perhaps you wonder why I talk thus to you! It is that you may be persuaded to put your trust and all your hope in Him who has for so many years been the support and stay of your tottering old grandfather.

"Be as cheerful and happy and active as you will, but, dear James, never forget the God of your fathers; it is the fear of the Lord only that can give true happiness through life and peacefulness in the prospect of death."

G. H. Sargent.

THE PRICE OF THE ESTATE.

A POPULAR preacher on one occasion gave a very striking illustration, something after the following manner:

A person desires to buy an estate, and is asked to bring what he wishes to offer for it. He comes to the owner with what he reports to be a bag of gold. It is spread out, but as the owner of the estate glances at it, it seems very suspicious looking coin.

The buyer is surprised too, he thought it very fine gold; but it is surely silver instead, only silver! a great mistake certainly, but will not silver be received?

"It doesn't look very good silver," remarks the lord of the land.

"Not good silver!" It *is* curiously dim, it cannot be silver either; it is only copper after all. But copper is good money, current coin, the best he has at any rate. Perhaps a bargain may yet be struck.

Again the eye of the owner of the estate rests upon the purchase money, and wonderful is the effect of his glance. The buyer gazes confounded on his own offering. His boasted gold, his pure silver, his solid copper, what is it after all that he has audaciously produced wherewith to purchase a magnificent freehold estate? It is nothing, absolutely nothing, under the detecting eye of truth, but a bundle of old rags.

And now must the would-be purchaser retire in confusion and disgrace, and give up all hope of the estate? He must certainly give up all idea of *buying* it, but if he clearly sees and honestly confesses that he is unable to bring anything as payment, the generous owner will bestow it upon him freely, "without money and without price."

What if any sinner be so self-deceived as to suppose he can by any means purchase the favour of God, and buy eternal life. Let him bring his good works, his best performances, his holiest devotions before the searching eye whose light is as a gleam of fire, and they will dim and fade and shrink into no more than the value of old rags.

Away with such an insult to the purity and perfection of God's righteous law! Away with any human plea for the kingdom of heaven, or any device of man's invention to intrude upon the finished work of the Son of God.

"Ye know that ye were not redeemed with silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." He paid the price of our eternal inheritance, and it is His free gift to all who come to Him poor and helpless to ask and receive it.

MEEK AS A LAMB.

"MEEK as a lamb" is a proverb, and a very expressive one, but who cares to earn such a character for themselves? "Bold as a lion!" "Fierce as a tiger!" "Strong as an elephant!" seem to be much more after the taste of many people. But whatever may be thought of it among the rough and ready fists upraised to resent insult, or to enforce obedience, the meekness of the lamb is as beautiful an ornament to the character of that brawny workman as to the tender woman or the little child.

"I beseech you by the *meekness* and *gentleness of Christ,*" writes the Spirit of God by the Apostle Paul. The picture of the shepherd bringing home the poor little sick lamb very justly reminds us of Jesus as the Good Shepherd, but Jesus has His type in the lamb also.

He once lay in the great field of the world—faint, bleeding, dying, but why? "He was wounded for *our transgressions*, and bruised for our iniquities," for "All we like sheep have gone astray," and so He took the wanderer's form, and allowed the iniquity of the strayed ones to be "laid upon Him." "He was oppressed and afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth: He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth."

In the value of His sufferings we can take no part, but we are desired to follow the example of His patience, and "tread in His steps." He leads away from unholy scenes, filthy conversation, and bad companionship, to "ways of pleasantness and paths of peace." He leads away from temptation and danger into the strait gate and narrow way of self-denial, resistance, and victory.

May all we owe Him as "the Lamb slain," constrain us to follow His example as the "meek and lowly" One; and instead of the staff of justice to arrest, revenge, and still the tempest of passion, we shall find the still small voice whispering within us of the "meekness and gentleness," the sweetest graces in the Christian character, more effectual to secure peace and order than human law with all its protections and its penalties.

FAITHFUL IN A VERY LITTLE.

In the summer of 1866 a Christian woman was afflicted with a malignant cancer, and became an inmate of a London hospital. She felt herself to be a dying woman, but trusted that, whether for life or death, God had brought her to the hospital for some wise purpose.

Laid upon her sick bed in the upper ward, she obtained permission from those around to read her daily portions of God's Word *aloud*. Feeling it to be the joy of her own heart, she longed to sow some of the good seed, and to lead others to rest upon the same staff which supported her in her time of need.

Having received permission to do so, she drew forth, as often as she had strength, from beneath her pillow her well-worn and much-loved Bible, and read aloud without comment.

In a few days a young woman, who had attempted her life by cutting her throat in a drunken quarrel with her husband, was brought into the same ward. She refused to speak; was sullen, and would give no heed or reply to the kind inquiries of the Sisters who visited the hospital, and at last rudely refused to listen when they attempted to advise and admonish her for her good.

This was discouraging. Still the dear afflicted one lying near, daily read on from God's Word, praying God that His gracious Spirit would bless it and make it a solace to all the suffering ones around, as it had long been to herself. That poor young woman recovered from the effects of her self-inflicted wound, and the time came for her to leave the hospital.

She still seemed unmoved by the kindness of those in attendance; but before quitting the ward she came to the bedside of this faithful Christian and said—

"I do not know who you are, but I have heard the Gospel from you for the first time in my life, and I am going home to try and do better." She would not be detained, but hurried from the room, and was soon gone from sight.

With such an instance before us of God's promise being sure, that His word shall not return unto Him void, should we not be more in earnest in that blessed work? Let us never lose an opportunity of saying a word for Christ when we can.

Reader, let me ask you one question—Have you any stay in the time of sickness like this dear suffering child of God? She found support in the promises of Him who is faithful and true. Now one of His promises is, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."

Come then to Jesus. Sin-stricken, sorrowing brother or sister, come, and you shall find rest to your soul; for His yoke is easy and His burden light. Cast yourself upon Christ as a lost sinner. Look to His cross as the only way of approach to God. Trust in His merits, His intercession, His priesthood, before God.

Covet earnestly the best gifts, especially the gift of the Holy Spirit; and then be assured that they who trust in the Lord shall want no manner of thing that is good.

DIVINE SERVICE.

It is a great error to confine "divine service" to temples and assemblies, or to suppose that we are only doing the Lord's work when we are engaged in devotional exercises, or labouring for the conversion of sinners.

Whatever right thing which a man does heartily, as unto the Lord, is the Lord's work. The farmer, when he is carefully and wisely cultivating the soil, is truly doing the Lord's work. Ploughing, if well done, is a religious work as well as praying. The merchant, when he makes an honest exchange, is doing the Lord's work. Dealing justly is a religious act as well as warning sinners to flee from the wrath to come, though of a different kind.

A man is doing God's work when he is doing that which pleases God. A man is doing the Lord's work when he is faithful to his employer—does a fair day's work; when he takes proper care of his health; when he governs his temper; when he is courteous to strangers, and lends a helping hand to the needy; when he has a word of encouragement for the desponding; when he sets an example of industry and honesty; when he returns good for evil; when he leads such an upright, benevolent, God-honouring life that men take knowledge of him that he has been with Jesus.

Religion does not consist solely in reading the Bible, praying, attending church, and labouring for the conversion of men. These are important duties, but they do not include the whole duty. God's will has reference to every act of our lives, and by faithfulness in the common walks and acts of daily life, we may "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things."

* * *

WHAT IS YOUR INFLUENCE?

Influence! what a mighty power it is for good or evil! As every one has it, so every one must exercise it whether willingly or not. There is no discharge in the warfare of life, and whenever influence is used the user is fighting either on God's side or on Satan's, and how often that is, is hard to say!

In Slippery Places.

For every spoken word and every little action bears its fruit, much more every printed sentence.

We often say that example has a marvellous power. For instance, what mimics children are! How soon they try to do what they see their elders doing. How quick they are to use the words of those about them.

And men and women are in this respect, as in others, much like children. They copy one another; and as one cannot touch pitch and not be defiled, so scarcely can one encounter evil, much less copy it, and not be harmed.

We cannot help exercising an influence wherever we go; thank God, we can help exercising it badly. There are saintly children of God who seem to leave a breath of heaven behind them, like the sweet perfume of flowers. There are some animals which bear so foul a smell about them, as to keep every other creature at a long distance off. Alas! are there not some human beings who are, in some respects, as bad? So, for good or for evil, does one man's spirit act upon his fellow's. And is not this a serious thought?

What is the influence that I am exerting by my daily words and actions?

Do not put away the question, but look to it! Am I on God's side, or am I one of Satan's soldiers?

Am I, indeed, doing the devil's work to earn the devil's wages? Am I fighting a losing battle, the end of which is certain death?

Oh, brother, pray for God's Holy Spirit that He may help you to choose the right! May your influence be always exercised in the cause of Christ, as every Christian's should be.

Confess him now before men, so will He confess you before the angels in the presence of God.

Deny Him now, and He must deny you at last.

The Bay of Naples—Mount Vesuvius in the Distance.

WHO'S YOUR GUIDE?

On July 1, 1891, two travellers from Brazil were sitting smoking on a terrace that looked out on that most lovely spot in Europe, the Bay of Naples. Suddenly one of them exclaimed to the other, "Come what may, I must go up there." As he spoke he pointed to Mount Vesuvius, which was in eruption at that time, and from the top of which flames and smoke were pouring forth. But the ascent could not be done without a guide, and not one of those who are licensed by the Government to conduct people up to the mountain was at hand. But that difficulty was soon got over. A man was found who declared he knew the mountain as well as he knew his own house. And so off the three men started towards the top of Vesuvius, which was wrapped in vapour, smoke, and fire.

When not far from the top the man who had proposed the ascent asked the guide whether it would be safe to go on farther, so as to get near the edge of the crater from whence there were issuing smoke and burning lava. The guide told him he need not fear; many a traveller had gone nearer to the crater than they were at that moment, and that there was no danger. So on the man went, when suddenly, without the slightest warning, the ground under his feet opened, and in at instant he found himself falling headlong into a fearful chasm from which there came up suffocating fumes of sulphur.

Down the unfortunate wretch went, perishing in the flames and red-hot lava inside the mountain. The two other men were helpless. All they could do was to turn and flee down the mountain in terror, fearing lest the earth should open in the same way under their feet and swallow them up as it had done with their companion.

A more ghastly and awful death than that which came upon that poor man on Vesuvius could not be imagined.

What verdict on the cause of his death could be given but this: He chose his own guide. That guide was incompetent and ignorant. Hence the result.

In other words, if a man chooses to follow a guide who leads him wrong he will have to put up with the consequences.

For instance, a man takes for his leader an atheist or infidel. That man's end and doom will accordingly be that to which the following of such a leader ends. That man will not escape that doom by saying he was mistaken in his guide.

There is no such thing as the followers being excused because the leader they chose turns out to be incompetent and ignorant. Men think it very fine to call themselves followers of men who laugh at Christ and His words. Whether it be a fine thing to be a follower of such guides remains to be seen. When we know the exact doom to which the teaching of such guides brings men, then we shall be in a position to judge.

But do not forget that it will be too late then to say you made a mistake and chose the wrong guide. We *choose* our guides now; we get the *consequence* of that choice hereafter. God *must* be the safest guide. For He cannot be either ignorant or incompetent. He promises to guide us with His counsel now; *and after that to receive us* into glory. Can the infidel leader do as much as that for us?

Octavius Walton.

* * *

PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S HOME LIFE.

President Lincoln, amid all his public burdens and responsibilities, sought relief from the strain in the society of his family. He could turn aside from the mob of office-seekers who daily afflicted him, and find in his children's society refreshment of spirit, the bonds of affection being thus strengthened by the cares that too often estrange a busy man from his family.

Colonel John Hay, who, as Lincoln's secretary, was brought into very familiar intercourse with him, thus speaks of the President's home life at the White House:—

"During the first year of the administration, the house was made lively by the games and pranks of Mr. Lincoln's two younger children, William and Thomas. The two little boys, aged eight and ten, with their Western independence and enterprise, kept the house in an uproar. They drove their tutor wild with their good-natured disobedience; they organised a minstrel show in the attic; they made acquaintance with the office-seekers, and became the hot champions of the oppressed.

William was a child of great promise, capable of close application and study. He had a fancy for drawing up railway time-tables, and would conduct an imaginary train from Chicago to New York with perfect precision. But this bright, gentle, studious child died in February, 1862. His father was profoundly moved by his death, though he gave no outward sign of his trouble, but kept about his work the same as ever. His bereaved heart seemed afterwards to pour out its fulness on his youngest child.

Tad was a merry, kindly little boy, perfectly lawless, and full of odd fancies and inventions. He ran continually in and out of his father's cabinet, interrupting his gravest labours and conversations with his bright, rapid, and very imperfect speech—for he had an impediment which made his articulation almost unintelligible until he was grown. He would perch upon his father's knee, and sometimes even on his shoulder, while the most weighty conferences were going on. Sometimes escaping from the domestic authorities, he would take refuge in that sanctuary for the whole evening, dropping to sleep at last on the floor, when the President would pick him up and carry him tenderly to bed.

As time wore on and the war held its terrible course, upon no one of all those who lived through it was its effect more apparent than upon the President. He bore the sorrows of the nation in his own heart, he suffered deeply, not only from disappointments, from treachery, from hope deferred, from the open assaults of enemies, and from the sincere anger of discontented friends, but also from the world-wide distress and affliction which flowed from the great conflict in which he was engaged, and which he could not evade.

One of the most tender of men, he was forced to give orders that cost thousands of lives; by nature a man of order and thrift, he saw the daily spectacle of unutterable waste and destruction which he could not prevent. The cry of the widow and orphan was always in his ears; the awful responsibility resting upon him as protector of an imperilled Republic kept him true to his duty, but could not make him unmindful of that vast sum of human misery involved in a civil war."

Lincoln's address, delivered at the beginning of his second administration, concludes with these noble words:—

"If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those 'offences' which, in the providence of God, 'must needs come,' but which, having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that He gives to both North and South this terrible war, as the woe due to those 'by whom the offence came,' shall we discern therein any departure from those Divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to Him? Fondly do we hope—fervently do we pray—that this mighty scourge may very speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue till all the wealth piled by the bondman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn by the lash shall be paid by another drawn by the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, 'The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.'

"With malice towards none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have won the battle, or for his widow and for his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace amongst ourselves and with all nations."

NAT, THE QUARRYMAN.

By Eglanton Thorne,

Author of "Nathan Quilter's Fall," etc.

Chapter V.—Self-condemned.

One afternoon Miss Trotter, armed with basket and trowel, set forth from her lodgings on a ferning expedition. She had been told that the beautiful "maidenhair" fern grew wild in some places on the cliffs at Trevena; but as yet she had failed to discover any of its haunts. To-day she was determined to make a more thorough search for it.

It was a lovely afternoon. The sun shone warmly; but an invigorating breeze blew from the sea. Miss Trotter paused at the head of a grassy undulating slope, which ran down from a great height to the sands, and looked about her. Far away to the horizon stretched the sea, blue as blue can be, save for the foaming margin that marked the base of the cliffs.

The long curling white billows were playing gently on the sandy shore. There was not a sail in sight anywhere on all the broad expanse of sea. Miss Trotter had a strange sense of solitude, but it was a solitude that was full of peace. She heard no sound save the whisper of the wind as it stirred the tall grasses amidst which she stood, the chirping of the grasshoppers, and the deep sonorous fall of the billows below.

A hawk was hovering overhead. She watched him curiously as he wheeled to and fro, now poising almost motionless in mid-air, and then darting into the grass after his prey. She walked on down the slope, looking diligently for ferns, but saw only feathery grasses interspersed with tall foxgloves, furze, and fading bracken. Evidently she had not found the right spot yet.

To the left the sharper edge of the cliff showed where the slate quarry had cut into its face. Glancing in this direction Miss Trotter perceived a man coming along the path above the quarry. She resolved to go and meet him. Perhaps he would be able to tell her where the ferns she wanted might be found. So she retraced her steps to the path which ran along the cliffs, and climbing a stile, proceeded towards the quarry.

As she drew nearer to the man, she saw that he was none other than Nat Youlton. She was pleased to have this chance of speaking to him, and quickened her steps; but to her amazement, whilst he was still at some distance from her, Nat suddenly bent down, took off his cap, and then disappeared over the edge of the cliff in a way that seemed marvellous to her.

She half expected to hear a cry of agony follow his mysterious disappearance, but none such ensued, and when she reached the spot she found that here an iron rope ladder hung from the top of the cliff. Glancing over she saw Nat half-way down the face of the cliff, his cap held between his teeth for security from the strong breeze, whilst with both hands he grasped the ladder which swung to and fro with him as he descended.

It seemed to the lady a perilous mode of descent, and she watched him nervously till she saw him step on to the pavement of rock below. He was so far down, and the breeze was so strong, that he would not have heard her voice had she shouted with all her might. But she made no such attempt to communicate with him. A little disappointed she pursued her way, still looking about her for ferns.

Presently she came to where a narrow path winding down the cliff seemed to lead to the sands. It was a narrow rough little track, scarce more than a sheep-walk; but it promised to take her to parts she had not yet explored, and she followed it. It grew steeper and rougher as she descended. Presently she was rather climbing than walking.

A little further on she found herself amidst broken masses of slate. It was not easy to climb over these; they slipped after her as she descended, and she began to fear that it would be impossible for her to retrace her steps if she wanted to do so. She went on bravely, however, till she reached a point where it seemed impossible to go further, either up or down.

She would have felt alarmed had not the sound of a workman's mallet, falling with steady strokes somewhere close at hand, assured her that she was not far from help.

She clambered on to a huge mass of rock, and then saw how she could make her way round the next bend of the cliff. Treading carefully over the rough sharp stones, she came into the midst of the quarry. On the right lay a little tram line, with some trucks used to convey away the slates; but the trucks were empty now, and the place showed few signs of work.

Guided by the sound of the mallet, Miss Trotter looked up and saw Nat Youlton, working by himself, high up on a platform of rock. She shouted to him, and at the sound of her voice he ceased working, and looked down at her in astonishment; then, seeing that she wished to speak to him, he swung himself down the ladder and came rapidly towards her, springing easily over the rough loose rubble and sharp rocks.

"I have lost my way," Miss Trotter said, as he came up to her. "I thought the path I took would bring me to the sands; but it only brought me here, and now I don't know where to turn. I don't believe I *can* go back the way I came."

"Ay, it's a rough path that," said Nat, "too rough for the likes of you; but I can soon show you a way down to the sands, if that's what you want."

"Thank you," said Miss Trotter; "I thought you would be able to help me out of my difficulty. I have been looking for ferns, but I cannot see any of the kind that I want."

Nat turned and pointed towards the cliff, above the spot where he had been at work; "Yon's the maidenhair fern," he said; "was you looking for that?"

Miss Trotter could see only that a green plant, of some description or other, was growing thickly on the face of the cliff.

"Is that it? All that way up!" she said, in a tone of disappointment. "Then I must give up all hope of getting a root. I did not know that they grew in such inaccessible places."

"Yes, they mostly grows high up; it's their only chance, don't you see? People are for ever rooting them up, if they grow where they can be reached. But I can soon get you some of the ferns."

"Oh, no, thank you. Pray don't trouble; I am sure it would be dangerous," Miss Trotter said. But her words were unheeded. Nat was already on his way to the spot. How easily he climbed! In a few moments he was back on his platform, and she saw him lift the ladder and place it near the spot where the ferns grew.

Then she had to turn away her eyes; it made her so nervous to watch his movements. But in a very short time he was again by her side with several of the delicate green plants in his hands.

"Will these do?" he asked; "they have good roots to them, and they'll grow if you teal* them."

"Oh, thank you, thank you very much," said Miss Trotter, heartily; "they are lovely. Oh, I *am* glad to get them!"

"The gentry mostly likes them," said Nat. "I don't see much in them myself; but it is curious how they grow on such tiny ledges with scarce any root-hold at all."

"It is, indeed," she replied, examining the roots with interest. "Well, I never saw them growing wild before. You know I come from Plymouth, and they do not grow like this there. You have not forgotten me, I hope, Nathaniel Youlton, for I have not forgotten you."

He had not forgotten her. At the first glance he had recognised her as the lady who had spoken to him about his mother. It was with extreme wonder that he saw her suddenly appear before him as he was at his work, for he had been thinking of his mother as he worked there alone, of his mother and of Mrs. Trewarne—the two were often associated in his thoughts."

"I remember you," he said, bluntly; "you're the lady as was so good to my mother. What do you think of this place now? Was you ever in a quarry before?"

"Not in one of this description," she replied; "what quantities of slate there are! But you do not work here alone, surely?"

She was astonished to see no other workmen about.

"No, there are generally other fellows here; but to-day they have all gone to Camelford fair. There's none too many of us at any time. The quarry does not pay well. Slate is plentiful as you see, but it costs so much to convey it away, there being no railway at this place. So the owner can't afford to employ many men."

"That is a pity," said Miss Trotter. But as she spoke she was not thinking much of the quarry. She was wondering why he had not gone to Camelford with the other men.

From what she had heard of his character she would have thought the fair likely to prove more attractive to him than his work. And his comrades had judged the same, and were astonished when Nat declined to accompany them.

They were at a loss to understand it, nor could Nat himself have explained his conduct. He could not have told them how it was that since the evening when young Mrs. Trewarne sat in his cottage and mended his coat, talking to him so pleasantly the while, he had begun to feel ashamed of his past life and his wild wicked ways.

He longed to live a better life, yet was hopeless of his own reformation; but the desire so far influenced him for good that he really tried to become a steady industrious workman, and to avoid doing anything of which he knew Mrs. Trewarne would not approve. And the new influence which was working in his life was strong enough to hold him back from the temptations and allurements of the fair.

Nat continued to talk about the quarry as he led Miss Trotter over the rough rubble towards the path that would take her to the sands.

"The paths are all bad here," he said; "you see we mostly uses the ladder. It's our only way home when the tide rises. There was a poor old fellow washed away here once. A thick mist came in from the sea and he could not find his way to the ladder."

"Oh, how sad!" exclaimed Miss Trotter. "I hope you do not often have such mists."

"Not often. We generally sees them coming and gets away in time. But that poor old chap missed his way somehow. His body came ashore at Boscastle, and they buried it in the churchyard there."

"And that reminds me," continued Nat with a change of manner, "I was thinking about her——." He paused and pushed his cap from his brow, looking out to sea with an assumption of indifference he was far from feeling. Evidently he did not find it easy to say what he wished. Instinctively Miss Trotter knew of whom he wished to speak.

"Of her—of your mother, you mean?" she said in a gentle encouraging voice.

"Ay," he returned, "I'm thinking—you saw the place where they laid her—there's no stone, I suppose, or nothing to say who lies there?"

"There is not."

"Ah, I thought so; then, what I wants to say is this—I've a matter of three pounds saved up for this thing, and I'd think it most kind of you if you would take the money when you go back to Plymouth and get some one to put up a stone there. It's asking too much of you, perhaps?"

"No, indeed, I will undertake it with pleasure. But you must tell me exactly what you want done."

"Oh, I only want a good plain stone, as good as you can get for the money, and on it they must put her name—her name and where she lived, and ——"

"Well?" said Miss Trotter as he hesitated.

"I'd like them to say as how she was a good mother—a real good mother."

"Very well," said Miss Trotter, "I will see that that is put on the stone. I will do my best to carry out your wishes, and I hope that when the stone is placed you will come to Plymouth to see it."

"Oh, I don't know about that," he said, looking startled by the suggestion; "I only want to know that the stone is put up, with her name on it, all neat and respectable like. If you will be so good as to see to it, there's no need for me to come."

"Oh, I think you ought to see it," said Miss Trotter; "I shall be anxious to know whether you approve of the way in which I carry out your instructions."

But Nat made no reply, so she did not press the point.

"It will be well to have a stone placed at the grave," she continued after a minute. "Who knows? Perhaps your sister may return to Plymouth some day and try to find ——"

"Don't speak of her," he broke in angrily. "She's no sister of mine; nor has been for years."

"But perhaps you have not heard that your sister ——"

"No, I have not heard and I don't want to hear. I've got no sister, I tell you."

"But surely, if she has repented——"

"Let her repent," he cried, fiercely. "Let her repent, if she can; what is that to me? Will repentance alter the past; can it take away the shame and grief she caused my mother? Such a mother as she had; so loved and cared for as she was, and then to go wrong as she did!"

Miss Trotter felt some alarm at Nat's vehemence; but she was a brave little woman, and never hesitated to speak her mind when it seemed right to do so.

"Youlton," she said, quietly, "you are hard upon your sister; but have you any right to judge her? You had the same mother; she was as good to you: have you shown yourself worthy of her? Tell me, did you never cause her shame and grief; is your life now what she would have wished it to be?"

He could not answer her. The condemnation her words suggested was too just. He paused, conscience-stricken and ashamed, at the bend of the path that led down to the sands.

"Yon's the way," he said, without attempting to reply to her words; "it's none too easy, but you'll be able to get along, and the tide's not yet on the turn, so you've plenty of time."

"Thank you," she said; "I see the way, and I shall get on now; thank you very much. You must not be offended at my words. It is true of many of us, unhappily, that we have sinned against love—not the love of fathers and mothers only, and of friends who hold us dear, but against that greatest, most wonderful love of all—the love of Him who died for us."

He must have heard what she said, but he gave no sign of hearing. He wished her good day curtly, and went back to his lonely toil.

The following day was Sunday, and in the evening, as the single bell was clanging to summon worshippers to the little church on the cliff, Nat Youlton was sauntering on the green turf not far from the churchyard.

He had no intention of attending the service, but there he was, and with somewhat of a Sunday look about him too. He wore the coat the widow had so skilfully mended, and he had taken pains to brush it well ere he put it on. Other signs of unusual attention to his personal appearance might have been discerned by a keen observer; but few persons were likely to give any thought to how Nat Youlton looked. Few cared enough about him even to wonder why he was there.

He lounged by the churchyard wall, turning his back on every one who advanced, but perfectly aware, nevertheless, of all who passed, till suddenly he felt himself turn hot and cold, and had a momentary desire to run away. The next moment a childish voice fell on his ear, crying eagerly, "Look, mother, look!" and then little Mary was putting her fat little hand into his and looking confidingly up in his face.

He bent and kissed her, then shook hands with her mother. She looked very pale and thin, and he asked anxiously if she had been well since he saw her.

"Much as usual, thank you. Are you coming in to church?"

"I," he stammered, surprised at the question. "I! oh, no; I never go to church."

"Never!" she repeated, and her tones and her look expressed such sorrow, that he felt mad with himself for giving her pain.

"You tum too," said little Mary, clasping his fingers, and she was ready to cry as he drew back. For a moment he felt constrained to go with them. Then he recollected himself.

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* Cornish for *plant*.

Mother's Joy.

"I can't," he said, "I really can't; I'm not one of that sort, you know." And they passed in, leaving him outside.

He felt very lonely as he lingered there. The bell ceased to ring. Soon even the latest comers were within the church. Nat had a strange sense of being left to himself

Well, he owned that it was but just. All his life he had been sinning against love, as Miss Trotter had said. He had broken his mother's heart; he had refused to listen to the story of a Saviour's love.

What could he expect but that he should now be left to himself? How could he dream that there was any love in this world for him? And disconsolately he wandered homewards.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A LESSON FROM THE BABY.

Mother's baby boy is two years old to-day, and he crows with delight as mother takes him in her arms and tosses him up again and again, until he fairly laughs with glee.

And baby's sister, Lucy, coming into the room begs to be tossed up in the same way. But mother finds baby boy quite heavy enough, and Lucy, jealous of her little brother, is angry because mother does not treat them both alike.

"My dear child," says mother, "you seem to forget that you are too big and too heavy for me to take you in my arms like I do baby. You had your share of baby's present fun when you were his age. You must try and learn the lesson that there is a proper time for everything. When baby is as old as you are he will want his toys just as you do, and you will have grown beyond caring for them, and will have taken to others then."

This is a lesson we all may learn. Everything has its proper time, and we must try and know what is good for us. When we are little it is father and mother who will best decide what we need, and as we grow older we shall see more clearly that the games and toys of babyhood must be left alone and given up to those younger than ourselves.

Then as time goes on we must learn to think more and more of others, and strive always to advance their pleasure and good, for the time spent in doing good to others is given to the best and purest of objects.

Mab.

CHIPPINGS.

Dr. Johnson's Prayer.—When Dr. Johnson began the work of "The Rambler," he composed and offered the following prayer:—"Almighty God, the Giver of all good things, without whose help all labour is ineffectual, and without whose grace all wisdom is folly, grant, I beseech Thee, that in this undertaking Thy Holy Spirit may not be withheld from me, but that I may promote Thy glory, and the salvation of myself and others. Grant this, O Lord, for the sake of Thy Son, Jesus Christ. Amen."

The Lacquer Tree.—Sixteen years ago, on his return from Japan, where he had spent a long time on a mission from the Prussian Government, Professor Rein had planted at Frankfort, in the Botanical Garden, some specimens of the lacquer tree (*Rhus vernicifera*), or, as it is sometimes called, varnish tree, from which the Japanese obtain the juice employed in producing the fine lacquer work for which Japan has such an unrivalled reputation.

During his stay in Japan, Professor Rein, had paid particular attention to the art products and industries of the country, and he then conceived the idea of attempting to grow the lacquer tree in Europe. There are now at Frankfort thirty-four healthy specimens, thirty feet high and two feet in girth a yard from the ground. From the original tree's seed other trees have been planted. The young trees are in a flourishing condition. It thus appears that there is no reason why the lacquer tree should not flourish in Europe; but there still remains the question whether the changed conditions of growth and climate in any way affect the character of the juice. To ascertain this Professor Rein has tapped the Frankfort trees, and has sent some of the juice to Japan, where it will be used by Japanese artists in lacquer work, who will report on its fitness for lacquering.

In the meantime some of the most eminent German chemists are analysing samples of the juice taken from the trees at Frankfort and samples of the juice sent from Japan, and should their reports and the reports from Japan prove favourable, it is probable that the tree will be largely planted in public parks and other places in Germany. In course of time a skilled worker in lacquer would be brought over from Japan to teach a selected number of workmen the art of lacquering wood, and in this way it is hoped that a new art and craft may be introduced into Europe.

PALE WITH HEAT AND WEARINESS SHE RESTED WITH HER LOAD.

GOING TO MARKET.

I saw her by the wayside of
A lonely country road,
Where, pale with heat and weariness,
She rested with her load.

The summer day was sultry, and
The little maiden sat
With drooping form, and weary face
Beneath her shady hat.

But when I paused to pity her
She looked at me, and smiled
So sweetly and contentedly,
I wondered at the child.

"You 're very kind, dear ma'am," she said,
Uplifting eyes of brown;
"And, yes, it *is* a heavy load
To carry to the town.

"What! Don't I wish I'd nicer work?
Oh no, ma'am, for you see
To help my poor dear father is
The work God gave to me.

"It 's no use thinking, is it, ma'am,
Of things that *we* should choose
To do for God, and all the while
His wishes to refuse?

"I think it must be surely right,
Whatever He should ask,
To try and do it cheerfully,
Though great or small the task."

Dear little maid! I would that all
Could have her sweet content,
And feel that even lowly work
May yet be Heaven sent.

M. Maddick.

APPLES.

The apple is a universal favourite. It is at once a beautiful flowering tree, which is adorned in the autumn with gorgeously-coloured fruit, not only exceedingly ornamental, but wholesome and useful in numberless ways. There are apples for table or eating purposes, apples for baking and boiling and roasting, and apples for cider making.

The latter sorts are chiefly grown in Kent, Devonshire, and Herefordshire, though Kent is not so much of a cider county as formerly, when it was the staple beverage at most of the farmhouses.

Fruit growing, especially in Kent, is decidedly on the increase, some thousands of trees being planted every year, and yet the supply is not sufficient for the demand, for quantities of fruit come from the Continent, special trains being run for the conveyance to London called "fruit trains," which generally run the whole journey from Dover to London without stopping. Then there are thousands of barrels from America of excellent quality, the American Newtown Pippin being sold in the English market at a high price.

One of the most curious facts of commerce is to find that frequently the apples or fruit grown, even near to a country-town, goes to London first, and is there sold in bulk to be divided and sold in small quantities, often to return to the place whence it came. This is so with fish as well as fruit—all the catch going to London, from whence often a seaside town is supplied.

Before the use of steamboats and railways the most profitable apples to grow were those that kept the longest, which commanded high prices in the early part of the following year; but now the case is quite altered, for the American supply comes in at that period, and competition, of course, lowers the price. At present, therefore, it is the earliest sorts of English growth that are the most remunerative, as they require little or no storage; but not being good keepers they must be sold soon after gathering, which fact somewhat regulates the price.

The best of the earlier sorts are Lord Suffield, Cox's Pomona, Keswick Codlin, and the Duchess of Oldenburg for the kitchen; and Devonshire Quarrenden, Early Harvest, Irish Peach, and Kerry Pippin for dessert. But the flavour of all fruit depends much on the nature of the soil on which it is grown.

Of the intermediate varieties, the Ribstone Pippin holds the highest honours, though it is an unequal bearer, and the tree is tender and liable to canker in many localities. For beauty and general purposes the Blenheim Pippin, or Blenheim Orange as it is generally called, stands unrivalled, as it is good for the kitchen as well as for dessert, and is a good keeper.

Fruit-growing is a source of profit which is often sadly neglected by the farmer and cottager. This should not be, as there are plenty of spaces of which no use is made where such trees would be both useful and ornamental. The best time for planting is November, but it may be done as late as March.

H. W.

NAT THE QUARRYMAN.

By Eglanton Thorne,

Author of "The Old Worcester Jug," "Nathan Quilter's Fall," etc.

Chapter VI.—A Vain Hope.

"Please, miss, Nat Youlton 's at the door, and would like to speak to you if he may."

"Certainly, I will see him with pleasure," exclaimed Miss Trotter, laying down her work; "ask him to step in."

But Nat was not to be persuaded to cross the threshold. He stood beneath the little porch, looking ridiculously big and out of place there. When Miss Trotter appeared, he extended his hand, and saying only, "I 've brought the money," dropped into her palm three sovereigns.

"The money!" said Miss Trotter. "Ah, yes, I remember. I 'll be sure to see about the stone as soon as I get to Plymouth. I return on Thursday."

"Ay, Mrs. Rush told me you was a-going on Thursday."

"I will let you know when the stone is placed on the grave, and then I hope you will come and see it," continued Miss Trotter.

"That 's as it may be," said Nat, bluntly; "I makes no promise."

"No, but I shall hope to see you. Stay, I will write down my address for you on a piece of paper, and then you will know where to find me when you come to Plymouth. My house is not far from the station."

"Thank you kindly," said Nat. And then with an awkward bashful air, he brought forward a tin can which he had been holding carefully behind him all this while. "Your pardon, miss, I 've took the liberty of bringing you a few blackberries. There 's some of the gentry likes them for tarts."

"Oh, thank you; how kind of you!" exclaimed Miss Trotter, warmly. "I am so fond of blackberries, and what beauties these are! I did not know that there were any ripe yet."

"They grows finely about the old quarry," said Nat; "they 're to be found there as soon as anywhere."

Miss Trotter was very pleased with her gift of blackberries. It seemed to show that Nat regarded her with goodwill. Was it her fancy, or was the man indeed less rough and wild-looking, less defiant in his bearing than when she first saw him?

It was no fancy. Nat was changed. A few weeks ago no one would have been less likely to spend his time in gathering blackberries than Nat Youlton, no one apparently would have cared less to give pleasure to another by so doing.

But since then the man's better nature had been developing rapidly. His wild reckless temper had been softened, his heart, long hardened by sin and selfishness, had begun to throb with new tenderness. Bitter regret for the past had been awakened in him with yearnings for a better life, blessed by the precious human bonds of which he had shown himself unworthy in the past.

It was a child's gentle charm which had opened the heart of Nat Youlton to these new influences. Then her mother's goodness and kindness wrought on him, and the chain of circumstances we have traced led him to take an interest in other lives, and find a strange new joy in serving them.

We know that it is by the Spirit of God that a man is awakened to a sense of sin; but the workings of that Divine Spirit are ever mysterious to us. We are sure, however, that God often employs the common instincts of the human heart as means to draw men to Himself. That which is natural precedes that which is spiritual, and of all the natural forces that sway the heart of man, none is more powerful for good in his life than that of love. Perhaps, if we more often bore this in mind, we should have better success in winning back the prodigals to their Father's love.

Leaving Mrs. Rush's door, Nat walked slowly up the village street. He had another tin of blackberries in his hand; he had not left them all with Miss Trotter. These were intended for Mrs. Trewarne; but Nat felt rather shy of presenting them as he drew near her cottage. If little Mary had not been at the door he would perhaps have passed without leaving them, but she raised a shout on seeing him, and came running to meet him. Mary had taken Nat for her friend, and the little maiden had very decided notions as to the claims of friendship.

"Tum in, tum in; you *must*," she cried imperiously; and Nat willingly yielded, and suffered the little fingers to lead him through the doorway. But he was dismayed by what he saw as he entered.

Mrs. Trewarne was seated in a large easy chair with a pillow behind her head. A white woollen shawl was wrapped about her shoulders, and her face was as white as her shawl.

"You are ill," said Nat, halting, whilst Mary still tried to drag him forward.

"I have been; I am better now. I took a chill somehow, and my cough has been very bad."

"You look ——." He checked himself. "I just came to bring you a few blackberries I found by the quarry. I thought maybe the little maid would like them."

"Indeed, she will be delighted. How good of you to think of her!" said her mother, whilst Mary began to exhibit an eagerness to make acquaintance with the blackberries.

Nat lifted her on to the settle, placed the tin pail beside her, and tucked his red handkerchief beneath her chin as a protection to her clean pinafore.

“One would think you was used to children to see you,” said Mrs. Trewarne, smiling as she watched him.

“She's a good little maid,” said Nat, shamefacedly. “Well, I'd best be going now, as you're not well.”

“No, no, sit down for a bit,” said the widow; “I've had no one to talk to since Mrs. Jowett came in to do up the place for me this morning. Tell me what you have been doing since I saw you.”

Nat's conversational powers were not great, but now he found that he could talk to Mrs. Trewarne. He told her of his visit to Miss Trotter, and of what that lady had undertaken to do for him.

Mrs. Trewarne listened with approval. “That's a good thought of yours,” she said. “You'll be glad to know that there's a nice neat headstone to the grave. It's as it should be; but you'll do better for your mother than that.”

“What do you mean?” he asked in surprise.

“You'll make your life what she would have had it. You say you were not good to her when she was with you; well, you can't alter that; but you will try now to live worthy of her—or rather, worthy of the Lord who died for us—not that we ever can be worthy of Him; but if we love Him and try to follow Him, He counts us worthy.”

She said the last words in a low tone, as though speaking to herself rather than to Nat. Then she began to cough. He watched her anxiously. He knew little of sickness, but the sound of the cough alarmed him, and he saw the look of pain it brought to her pale face, and the large beads of perspiration which gathered on her brow.

He rose in distress, longing to help her yet not knowing how. She gently signed to him that she wanted nothing, then lay back exhausted. He went out to the pump, however, and got her a glass of water, thinking, man-like, that that might do her good. She sipped a few drops and said that she felt better. Nat looked at her with troubled eyes.

“Don't be afraid,” she said, with a faint smile, “it is over now. I shall not cough again for a while.”

He was silent for some moments. He looked grave and stolid as he stood there before her; but strange thoughts agitated his mind. When at last he spoke it was to say something, not wholly unpremeditated, but to which he had hardly thought he ever dare give utterance.

“Look here, Mrs. Trewarne,” he said awkwardly; “it's plain to me that you're very ill, and need some one to take care of you.”

“Indeed, I am well looked after,” she replied. “Mrs. Jowett is very good in helping me, and all the neighbours are most kind.”

“I don't say that they're not kind,” he returned; “but I do say that you need more comfort than you get. You're not strong enough to work as you do.”

“I don't deny that the work tries me,” she returned; “but still I ought to be thankful.”

“Now listen to me,” he broke in; “there's my cottage up to Trewarmeth. It's not much of a place, I know, but you would soon make it look more home-like. There's room for you and little Mary there, and I'd be proud to work for you. Now don't look so puzzled like. What I mean is just this, will you be my wife and give me the right to take care of you?”

“Oh no, no, that can never be!” cried the sick woman, shrinking from him, whilst her pale face suddenly glowed crimson; “you must not speak of such a thing.”

“I know well that I'm not good enough for you,” said Nat, stolidly; “but you was a-saying just now that I might be a good fellow yet, and, if any one could make me good, it would be you.

“Ay,” he added with passion in his tones, “I swear I'll be real good to you, if you will have me. You shall never want for nothing; I'll work like six men for you and the little 'un.”

“I believe you would, I *know* you would be good to us,” she returned; “but, Nat, I could not do it.”

“Of course not,” he returned desperately; “I might have known. Of course you could not think of such a man as I am.”

“It's not that,” she said; “you don't understand me. It's just that I am not one of those women who can forget. I could never take another husband, for I still feel that I belong to Jack. Sometimes, when my cough is so bad, I fancy it won't be long before we are together again; and if it were not for little Mary I should wish that it might be so.”

“Ay, ay, I might have known,” he murmured, scarce heeding what she said; “such a fellow as I am!”

“Nat,” she said earnestly, “don't keep saying that. It was true what I said just now. If you have been bad in the past, you may begin a good life now. By the grace of God you may yet become such a man as any woman would be proud to call her husband.”

“Any woman!” he repeated, almost angrily; “do you think I would ever care for any other woman? No; you might have done anything with me; you might have made me good; but no other will ever have the chance.”

“Oh, don't say that,” she cried; “don't speak as if it all depended on me. It is not I who could make you good; it is God, who gives His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him.”

“I don't care,” muttered Nat, sullenly; “I don't care what becomes of me now. There would have been a chance for me if you would have ——.”

“I would do anything else to help you,” she said in distress. “Oh, don't go away in anger; be a friend to me, Nat—be a good kind friend to me and little Mary.”

“I meant to be,” he replied hoarsely; “I meant—but—I was a fool to think of it.” He was at the door now; but as he turned to say good-day he saw that she was leaning forward with outstretched hand. He could not but go back and take her hand and as he held the small white hand in his, and met her gentle pleading glance, a conviction that she was indeed not long for this world came upon him with painful force.

“God bless you,” he said; and then a sob escaped him, and he could not utter another word. “And may God bless and save my friend, Nat Youlton,” she responded in low sweet tones. But as he went away, with darkness and despair in his heart, he had no faith that her prayer would be answered.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

* * *

THE OBSERVATORY ON MONT BLANC.

A PLAN has been devised for building an observatory for astronomical and meteorological observations on the top of Mont Blanc, the highest mountain of the Alps. The following account of the plan, and the steps already taken to carry it out, is taken from a paper by M. Janssen, who is managing the enterprise.

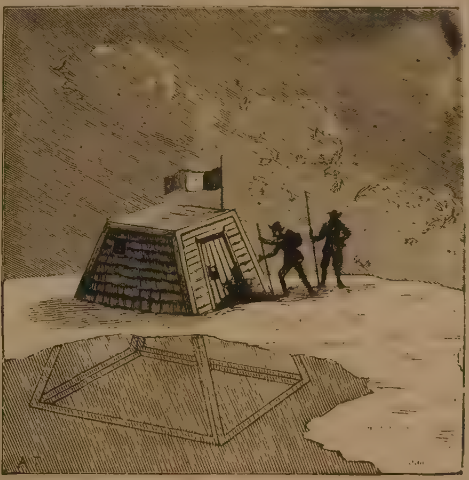


Fig. 1.—Wooden Hut on the Top of Mont Blanc.

The top of Mont Blanc—as its name of “white mountain” implies—is covered with a cap of hard snow, and the first thing to do was to find out how thick this snow was, and how far it would be possible to found the observatory on the solid rock. Work was begun in August of last year (1891). M. Eiffel, the celebrated engineer of the gigantic tower at Paris, undertook the enterprise, and M. Imfeld, an eminent Swiss engineer, conducted it personally.

A spot was chosen about thirteen yards below the top, on the Chamounix side of the peak, and a horizontal gallery was run southwards for about twenty-five yards, as shown in Fig. 4. The end of the gallery was then very nearly below the actual summit of the mountain. The snow became harder and harder as the work proceeded, but was never consolidated into ice.

In order to protect the workmen, it was thought advisable to build in the mouth of the tunnel a hut buried in the snow (Figs. 3 and 4). This hut shelters the workmen in bad weather, and prevents the snow from drifting into the tunnel. Besides these advantages, it will serve as a landmark to show the shifting of the snow on the crest.

These works took up most of August, as they were impeded by bad weather. M. Imfeld was then compelled to return home on business, and M. Janssen took charge of the enterprise. When M. Imfeld retired, the end of the gallery had been carried to a spot just below the eastern crest of Mont Blanc. This crest is very narrow if measured from north to south, but extends far from east to west.

It had always been the plan, as soon as the tunnel had reached a point exactly below the top, to drive side galleries along the ridge which forms the crest of Mont Blanc—that is, from east to west; for in this direction there is most chance of finding the rocks—if any such there are—which come within thirteen yards of the surface. M. Janssen therefore had a fresh gallery excavated from east to west, inclining towards the slope that looks over Italy, since the rocks appear nearest the crest on that side. The new tunnel was, like the first, twenty-five yards long.

No trace of rock was met with in either. This is not surprising, for the crest of Mont Blanc is a hundred and ten yards long, and a gallery a yard wide may easily have passed between two peaks. A curious sound-effect was noticed in the tunnels. The snow-walls deadened the voice so that workmen twenty yards apart could hardly make each other hear; while the hard snow itself seemed to convey sound readily, for workmen on the top of the mountain could hear the pickaxes of the men in the gallery twelve yards below them.

It may be that the frozen cap of snow that covers the group of sharp peaks which in all probability forms the real crest of Mont Blanc is more than twelve yards thick. So M. Janssen, though he would not give up the search for the points of rock, hit upon another plan for doing what was desired. It would not be impossible, he thought, to build his observatory on the hard snow of the cap. But a building for such a position would have to fulfil many requirements. Firstly, provision must be made against the shifting of the frozen snow-cap of the mountain, either up and down, or sideways.

Thus the building which is founded on the snow will have to be provided with machinery, so that if it is shifted from its first position it can be moved back to it again.

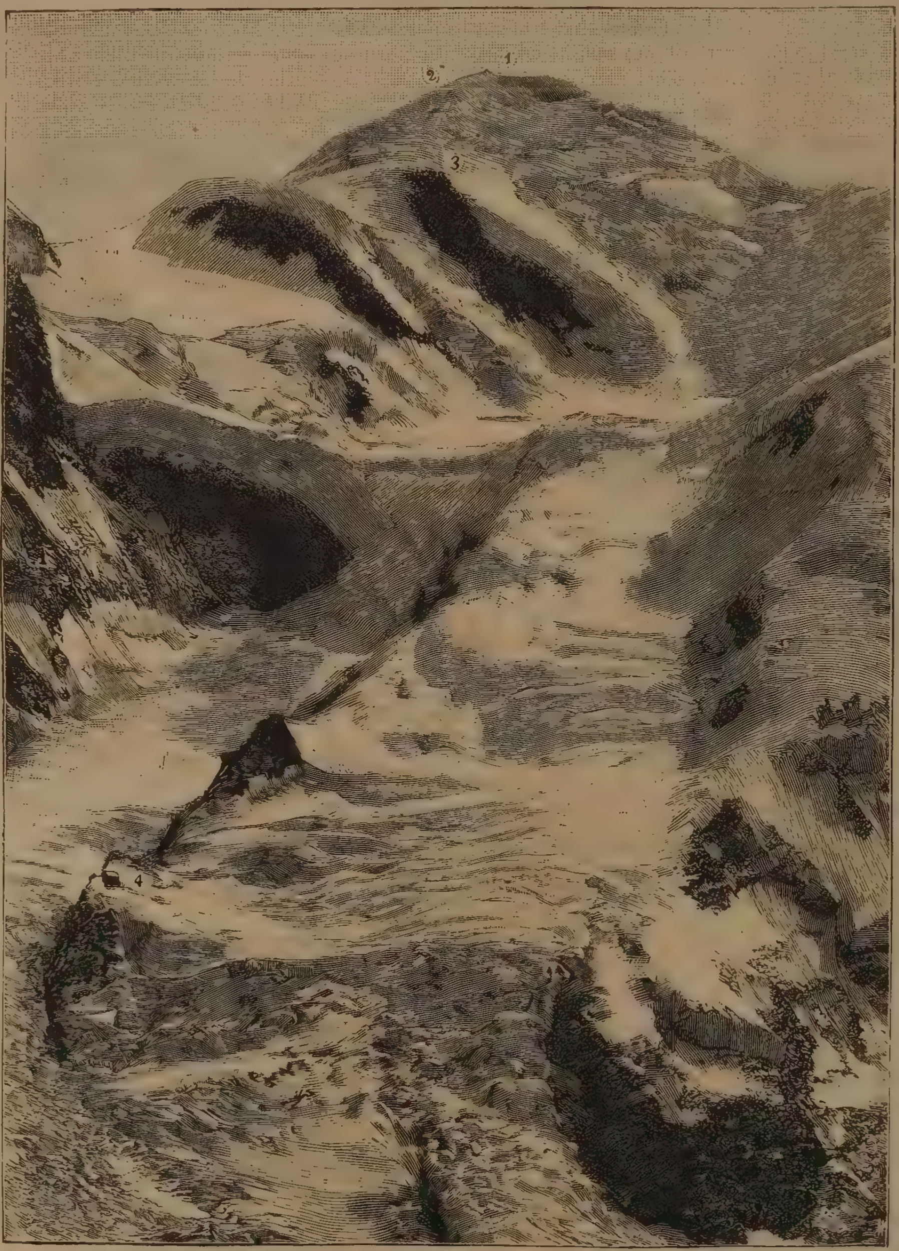


Fig 2.—View of Mont Blanc—*from a Photograph*.
1. M. Janssen's Hut on the Top. 2. The Petits Mulets Rocks. 3. The Grand Rocher-Rouge. 4. M. Vallot's Observatory.

M. Janssen studied the question carefully, and satisfied himself, by experimenting on the resistance of hard snow, that a rigid flooring laid under the building as a support for a set of screw-jacks, would resist a pressure of over three tons per square yard, which would be far more than would be needed in raising a building like the proposed observatory.

When the building was raised by the screw-jacks, the empty space below it would be filled in with snow, and the jacks could be adjusted for a new lift. In much the same way, a trench might be cut in the snow in the direction in which the observatory was to be moved, and the building pushed along it.

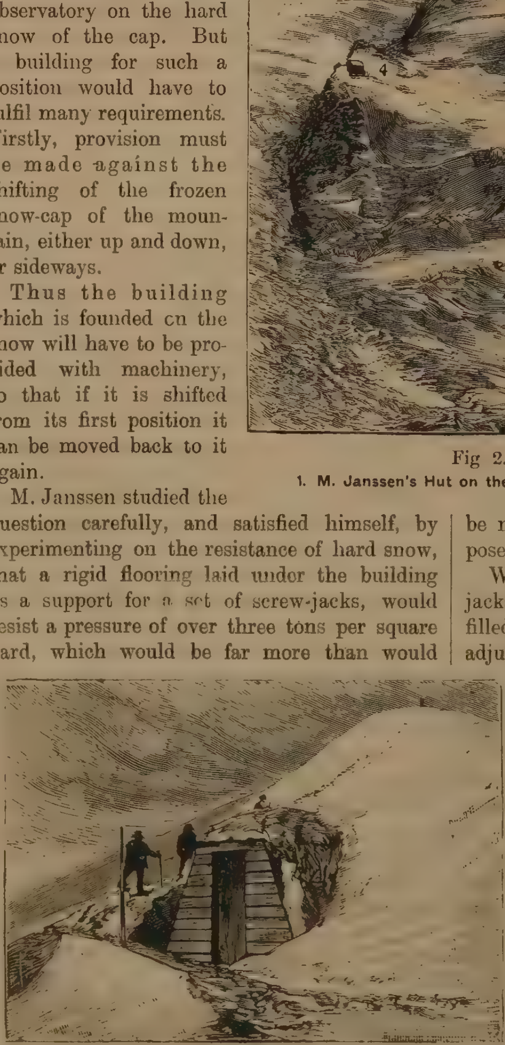


Fig. 3.—Hut at Entrance of Tunnel.

A building of this kind must evidently have its parts bound together so that it can be moved bodily in this style without danger; and, besides this, it must be deeply embedded in the frozen snow-crust to enable it to stand against the gales that often rage over the crest of Mont Blanc.

This result can be obtained by constructing a two-storey building, of which the lower storey, and part of the upper, would be below the level of the snow. The lower rooms, lighted through slabs of glass in the ceiling, could be used for bedrooms, storerooms, etc. They would have double walls, and might be made very comfortable, and far less exposed to the weather than the upper storey.

In order to test the possibility of his plan, M. Janssen wished to construct on the very top of Mont Blanc a little house which would remain there during the winter, and show by its movement (if any) whether, and how far, the snow shifted. The season was growing late, however, and it was thought that the time for working on the mountain was over.

Still, M. Janssen succeeded in inducing his workmen to make the attempt. The little hut was quickly built, and, favoured by fine autumnal weather, it was put up (Fig. 1). It is furnished at the corners with beams that project into the snow and are fastened to a strong framework of thick planking, over which the snow has been beaten down in order to hold it firmly.

When M. Janssen left Chamounix the little house had been erected for three weeks, and did not seem to have shifted in the slightest degree; M. Janssen has arranged to hear from time to time how it prospers. This year he means to build on the top a larger house, and begin observatory work.

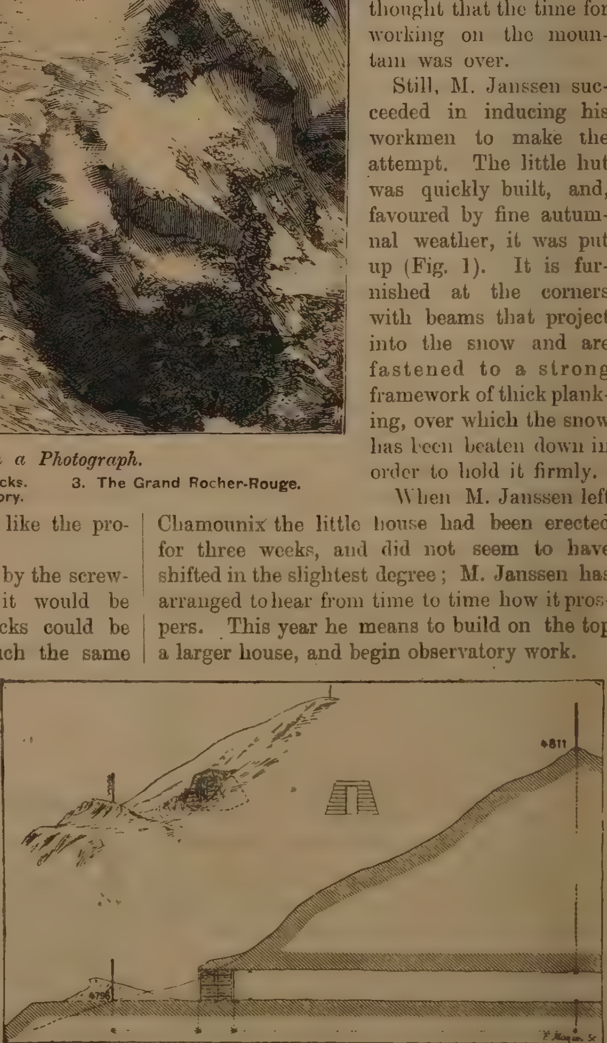


Fig. 4.—Tunnel near Top of Mont Blanc.

ONE BRICK WRONG.

W. L. J.
A. FERRIER.

SOME workmen were recently building a large brick tower, which was to be carried up very high. The architect and the foreman both charged the masons to lay each brick with the greatest exactness, especially the first courses, which were to sustain all the rest.

However, in laying a corner, by accident or carelessness, one brick was set very little out of line. The work went on without its being noticed, but as each course of bricks was kept in line with those already laid, the tower was not put up exactly straight, and the higher they built the more insecure it became.

One day, when the tower had been carried up about fifty feet, there was heard a tremendous crash. The building had fallen, burying the men in the ruins. All the previous work was lost, the materials wasted, and, worse still, valuable lives were sacrificed, and all from *one brick laid wrong* at the start.

The workman at fault in this matter little thought how much mischief he was making for the future. Do *you* ever think what ruin may come of *one bad habit*, one brick laid wrong, while you are now building a character for life? Remember, in youth the foundation is laid. See to it that all is kept STRAIGHT.

WARNED IN TIME.

We may read many a life story or, at any rate, many a chapter out of one, if we keep our eyes open as we pass along.

Here is one that I read in this way:—

A widow's lad, the eldest of five, is the hero of it. Not much of a hero either, you may say. Only an errand boy who had left his master's shop with a pretty heavy load of parcels to carry. He did not trouble himself about the weight when he started. He had often carried heavier weights without grumbling, and whistled a merry tune as he stepped briskly along.

But a change came over Charley Webb's face on the road. The merry whistling ceased, and a look of discontent spread over his countenance, as he lingered to watch some bigger lads who were gambling at a street corner.

Charley was no gambler. He had never any money to spare, but as he watched this game he thought to himself, "All these lads have plenty of money, and I am sure they have not worked for it. How easy it all seems! I'm certain that youth who laughed so loudly as he picked up all the coin and put it in his pocket, got more in a few minutes than I have earned by a day's work.

"What a many steps I go to earn a shilling, to say nothing of all the parcels I carry! Master is always calling, 'Charley, run off with that basket and make all the haste you can,' or 'Step across with this parcel first. It's wanted in a hurry, and you mustn't wait for the rest. You'll have to go again with the other things, so mind you don't loiter on the road.'

"He goes on from morning till night, and so do I, as if I never ought to be tired," said Charley Webb to himself as he watched the gamblers and wished he could get a living as easily as they seemed to do.

Charley told the truth. As fast as one load of goods was delivered, another was made ready, until the tired messenger was ready to wish that his master had not quite so many customers, or that some of them would carry their purchases home instead of leaving all for his young legs to convey.

Still Charley felt this would hardly answer. If there were not customers and parcels in plenty, errand boys would not be wanted, and his mother's face would not brighten at the sight of her lad's earnings when Saturday night came. Mrs. Webb always told Charley what a help he was to her, and her words and smile made him forget the endless messages and the weary limbs he had when he was trudging home after putting up the shop shutters till Monday morning. Charley thought how much more he could do for mother if he picked up money by handfuls instead of earning it by littles. But the boy saw only the winner's side, and heard only his boastful words. He had neither eyes nor ears for the loser, whose scowling face and even curses showed what he felt about having to pay.

There must be two sides to such a picture, and if money is won by handfuls, it must be lost in the same way. Charley had not considered that he might be the one to go home with empty pockets if he joined in such a game; but stood watching it, forgetful of his errand and of the weight of the basket on his arm.

All at once, a lad who had been watching at the corner gave a shrill whistle, and then ran away as fast as his legs could carry him.

The gambling youths snatched up the money and started in different directions, but one of them was stopped by a policeman, who seized him by the collar.

"You'll have to come with me," he said, as the youth struggled to get free. "It's of no use fighting. Your game is up, in more senses than one."

Then turning to Charley, who stood motionless and horrified at the sight, the policeman said, "Go your way, lad, and thank God you are not in the place of this youngster. He began by loitering on his errands, and watching such good-for-nothings as those you have been looking at to-day. By-and-by he started the same game, and robbed his master's till to get money to gamble with. He thought he was going to fill his pockets without working, and you see what he has come to. He'll get what he didn't bargain for—a lodging inside a prison, and he's lost more than the money he gambled with, for character and place are gone. He has been grabbing at a shadow, my lad, and has lost the substance."

Away went the officer with the wretched thief, and away went Charley Webb. The boy had learned a lesson which he was not likely to forget, and from that time to this he has shuddered at the very mention of gambling.

No more loitering at street corners, or envying the idlers there. Charley now feels that the money earned by honest labour is doubly sweet, and brings with it neither regret for the past nor fears for the present.

No more standing "in the way of sinners" for Charley Webb. He has learned what such beginnings lead to, and thanks God that he was warned in time.

Ruth Lamb.

A CLOUDY SKY.

People sometimes complain of clouds, and murmur at rain; but they forget that perpetual sunshine makes a desert land. If we are to have fertility, fruitfulness, and prosperity, we must have clouds in the natural sky; and so in the spiritual world, much of the blessing which we enjoy comes to us from our clouds and storms, as they alternate with brightness and sunshine.

Do not be afraid of clouds. There may be a cloud over your path, but that cloud may drop down fatness, and make glad your heart and your life. Your business, your prospects, your plans may be overclouded. Do not be disturbed; the cloud may have behind it the "sound of abundance of rain." Increased fruitfulness and abundant blessing may come to you through these clouds. Look up! There is a sun behind the clouds, there is sunshine beyond the clouds, and there is blessing in the clouds.

"Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust Him for His grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take;
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head."

THE SYMPATHY OF JESUS.

Jesus suffered. He suffered that He might personally know what His people have to endure and pass through. He wished to know all about us—to be as nearly like us as He could. He now knows not only what we feel, but how we feel.

No angel in heaven knows this; no angel can, for an angel never suffered. The tenderness, therefore, of Jesus is far beyond the tenderness of an angel; yea, of all the angels in heaven.

He knows what bodily pains are; and He knows what mental agitation, dejection, and agony mean. His nerves were shaken. His soul was troubled. His body suffered from hunger, thirst, cold, weariness, and wounds. He suffered in every part, and from every possible cause.

And He knows, therefore, the strength necessary to bear, and the comfort needful to sustain. He feels for us. More, He feels with us. He is our Head, and we are His members. The sympathy of the Head with the members is quick and constant, tender and perfect. Such is the sympathy of Jesus.

Suffering one, Christ alone can suitably sympathise with thee, because He alone can so sympathise as to sustain, sanctify thy sufferings, and certainly and honourably deliver thee. Jesus always has His eye upon thee. He is touched with the feeling of your infirmities. He will not lay on you more than you can bear, nor will He allow any one else to do so.

Look to Jesus under all your sorrows, sufferings, and pains, and draw comfort from this—Jesus feels for me, Jesus feels with me.

COMFORTED OF GOD.

How many hearts need comfort! Often in hours of grief they turn hither and thither for solace and consolation. To be comforted by friends and by brethren is a joy: and we are to comfort one another in affliction, by the words of hope and the prospect of the resurrection.

But the great source of comfort to Christian hearts is the loving God. The promises He has made, the hopes which He inspires, the prospects which He sets before us, the present help which He grants us in times of need, all these are sources of abundant comfort.

And it is only when we have tasted and shared this comfort that we are prepared to be comforters of others in their affliction and desolation.

As we become acquainted with "the God of all comfort," as "through patience and comfort of the Scriptures" we have hope, our acquaintance with the mysteries of Divine consolation enables us to be the comforters of others in the days of their grief and affliction.

"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of all mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."

* * *

TREES IN THE EAST.

"Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire," said our Lord, and probably many of us have quietly wondered at the words. Certainly in Europe such summary judgment does not prevail, but in Asia matters are entirely different. Here is the experience of an observant traveller (Dr. Van Lennep):

The Burial of Rebekah's Nurse.

"It is worthy of note that in Western Asia no tree is planted, or even allowed to grow, unless its fruit commends it to the care of man. Fuel being scarce, all other trees are cut down, the poplar alone may be excepted, whose tall trunk is needed for house building. It is still customary, however, to plant trees of various kinds by the graves of the dead, and no person would venture to cut them down.

"Solitary trees, also, not fruit bearing, are left to grow on some spot where the weary traveller seeks the shelter of their shade, or slakes his thirst at a well or spring of water. These last are generally the oak, the platanus or plane tree, and the terebinth, all of which grow to a great size, and afford refreshing shade to a large company.

"Such solitary and venerable trees are often seen on the outskirts or within the limits of villages; an extensive platform surrounds the trunk, the soil being trodden hard by the feet of many generations. Here grave councils are held, and here, also, occur the chief festivities on the occasion of a marriage or other causes of rejoicing.

"The reader will find many such trees referred to in the Bible, but we merely remind him of Abraham's tree, probably a terebinth, underneath whose shade the patriarch entertained the angels; the oak which was by Shechem; the oak under which was buried the nurse of Rebekah; and the juniper tree where Elijah was refreshed by the angel on his way to Horeb, the Mount of God."

Surely one of the best uses to which a tree was ever put was that made by Zaccheus of the sycamore, into the branches of which he climbed to see the Lord.

The wood of this tree has a coarse grain, and was not considered very valuable. Yet it is very durable. It is said that all the wood found in the catacombs of Egypt is of the sycamore tree, which has remained sound for three thousand years. The uses they made of its wood, of its fruit, and of its fine shade, made it valuable to the Egyptians.

Hence the Psalmist expressly mentions, among the judgments sent upon Egypt, that the sycamore trees were destroyed with frost (Ps. 78. 47).

TINKER, TAILOR, AND THE REST OF THEM; OR, MRS. WATSON'S SEVEN LODGERS.

No. II.—TAILOR.

"I'LL take them two rooms, please Mrs Watson; the front for my tailorin', and the back to sleep in and have my meals." And with these words Mr. Snippett settled for the lodgin'.

That same night he moved in, and next mornin' he was a sittin' cross-legged, stitchin' at the most wonderfullest pair of trousies I ever see, the pattern on the cloth runnin' in big light stripes, lookin' for all the world like fencin' and five-barred gates, and fit for a sportin' man's wear only, if so be it was fit for any one's.

Such a grave sad face had Roger Snippett! I felt moral certain that he'd had a deal of sorrer in his life; yes, I was sure of this as soon as I clapt eyes on him; nor I wasn't mistook neither, as I found when I came to know him better.

Not that he ever complained; but he had, at times, a sort of far-away look in his eyes, and he would stop in his work and seem to listen, almost breathless now and again. And the longin' look and the eager ear seemed both waitin' for some sight and some sound that never come.

The poor old chap was very quiet. Never did I know a more silented man, savin' one as was deaf and dumb, and so had some trouble in makin' his meanin' clear. But it was by little things now and then, that I come to understand the natur' of Roger's biggest trouble, though I didn't larn all till later.

The first time my eyes was opened a little was when he was along of me and my Jacob at church. The parson he were readin' the parable of the prodigal son, when I heard a queer half chokin' noise by the side of me, as though some one were tryin' to swallow a big pill, and it didn't go down over and above willin'.

I glance at our lodger, and I see him with his head down, and the tears a tricklin' through the fingers as covered his face.

That night me and my husband, we heard the poor old feller prayin' after he got to his bedroom, and as I passed his door, these words reached me—more like a cry than any prayer I ever listened to afore or since—

"Dear Lord, whose tender compassions is such, that no sinner need be utterly lost or cast away, have pity on my poor lad, and bring him home to the fathers as loves him still; to Thyself and to me." And then I passed on to my room, for what was I, that I should stand on that holy ground where the cryin' suff'rin' soul was meetin' with its God?

Another time I was dustin' in his bedroom, and I lifts his few books off the shelf to give 'em a wipe. While I were doin' this, he come in, and pointin' to a Bible in my hand, he says—

"I set great store by that, Mrs. Watson; it was my son's. It's his birthday to-day," says he, "and if he's livin' he'll be twenty-two."

Then, seein' that the poor old feller were greatly moved, I says—

"Please God, Mr. Snippett, he's alive, and he'll come back to you some day."

The tailor, he didn't answer for a moment or so, but at last he says, says he, in a tremblin' husky voice—

"May it please the Almighty to make them words of your'n come true."

But meek and good as the old man were, he wasn't altogether an angel, and this was a great comfort to me as were quite at the bottom of Jacob's ladder, if indeed I was anywheres near it at all.

One day, Roger he says to me, "Mrs. Watson, you've heard me speak of my boy, my poor Freddie? Well, the lad was a good-hearted lad as ever lived, but he got into the company of a feller older than hisself, that led him into no end of wickedness. And sometimes, Mrs. Watson, I feel that angered and sore towards the scoundrel, that I think I could scarce find it in my heart to forgive him on his dyin' bed. Yes—God forgive me!" says the poor old feller, "but with all the hate that's in me, I hate the man as led my Freddie astray. I don't know his name, I never see him, to my knowledge, and may be the rascal knows nothin' of me neither, for I b'lieve Freddie, when he began to go wrong, dropped his own name and took another. But knowin' him or not makes no difference to hatin' a man what tempts his fellers to the ruin of their souls."

"Hush, hush, Mr. Snippett!" says I. "You feel like that now, but if ever the time comes when your enemy needs your forgiveness, could you—or any child of the Lord—refuse it?"

Well, at that my old lodger, he shakes his head, but he didn't say no more, only went and sat down in the workroom and began stitching away as quick and reg'lar as the tickin' of a clock.

Roger Snippett was a good man at his trade, understandin' it thorough, nor he never wasted no time, nor forgot orders through drink. So his biz'ness prospered, and pretty soon he'd so much work on hand, that he advertised for a journeyman to help him.

"Stitchin' at the most wonderfullest pair of trousies I ever see!"

Three or four young chaps came, one after another, on trial for a week, but one couldn't make button-holes, and another sewed unequal and slovenly, and a third prigged a yard of broadcloth, so of course none of them wouldn't do.

But at last came a furrin' feller as talked the queerest English; but his stitchin' was lovely, his cuttin' out and fittin' was a perfect pictur'. He was from Germany, but he'd been some years in England, and knowed our ways well enough. His name was Hans Klettermann, and he was a quiet feller with a round pasty face, and the thickest head of hair I ever see.

Well, my old lodger and Hans, they got on very comfortable together, till one day Roger, he sickened with what we should say now was influenza—and had to keep his bed.

If I liked the furrin' chap afore, I liked him a sight better now. He worked hard from mornin' till night, so as to keep up with the orders; he went out and fitted the customers, and got through with everythink marvellous quick. And yet with all he had to do he found time to run in and see the old man frequent durin' the day, and sat up with him all one night when poor Roger were very bad.

One mornin' early Hans was with him, and I was sweepin' up a little in the workroom, when the old man called to me to give him his son's Bible. "Hans can read English," says he, "and I'm a-goin' to get him to read me a few verses," he says, "me not bein' able to read to myself to-day."

So I gave the Bible into the young German's hand, and Roger, he says, "there's a mark in it; please open at that place and read the parable of the prodigal son; and as for you, Mrs. Watson, if there's anythink you'd like to do in this room, please do it, you won't be in our way, not at all," says he.

"Well, when Hans had stumbled through his readin' somehow, the old tailor he turn to him and he says, "Thank yer, Hans. And now, you've been so kind to me since I've been ill, that I'd like to tell you of somethink as lies very near my heart, and maybe you can help me."

"And vat is dat, mine goot friend?" says Hans, in his outlandish English.

"Hans," says Roger, "four year a-gone my son he left me, and I never seen him since. He got into bad company—he did—and went wrong, and now I'm afeard he's stayin' away thinkin' I won't take him back. He don't know how his father loves him still; how I've thought of him, and worked for him, and saved for him, allers hopin' he'd come home. Well now, Hans, you bein' a journeyman tailor, haven't you, p'raps by chance, met my boy—him havin' been brought up to our trade? Did you never happen to see a tall lad with a lot of light curly hair, blue eyes, and a smooth face like a gal's?"

"Such a young man have I in time past certainly known," says Hans, "but the name was not your name."

"Mrs. Watson," says Roger, turnin' to me, "please open the drawer in that there table, and give me the letter you'll see there."

I handed him the little packet, and the old man, with shakin' hands, took out of it first a letter and then a photograph.

"See, Hans," says he, "there's my boy's writin', and here's his likeness as he looked four years a-gone."

But the minute the German caught sight of the picture, he give a little sort of cry, and says he quite piteous—

"Mine Gott, mine Gott! vat is dis?"

"You know him then?" asks Roger.

"Ach, yes; I did know dis lad; his name it vas Smit. I did know him only too much, too much for the good of him and for the happiness of me. No, my master" (for he see old Roger were a-goin' to speak)—"I pray you to say notin' yet. Wait till I tell the whole truth to you."

I can't begin to tell Hans' story as Hans told it, and it would take too long beside. But in a few words I'll just say that this Hans Klettermann was one and the same man as had led Freddie Snippett astray. But at last they quarrelled and parted, as them wrong friends allers does, sooner or later After that Hans was in prison for a time for theft or somethin', and there the chaplain (one of them lovin'-hearted Christian men as is fit disciples of Him who never broke the bruised reed, nor quenched the smoking flax), the chaplain, I say, visited him often, talked to him kind and earnest, read to him, prayed with him, pleaded with him, led him—sorrowin' for his sins—to the cross of Jesus, and sent him away—when his sentence was worked out—a new man.

Well, as Hans finished his story—and a movin' tale it were, even in his queer jargon—old Roger, he kep silence for a minute. Then he just turned his face to the wall, and clasps his hands, and says in a soft voice, as though to some one very near—

"O Lord God, Thou knows all my sorrer; and all the sin of the hate I've never tried to hide from Thee. But I bless Thy holy name, that in Thy mercy and forbearance Thou's made it so easy for me to forgive this man. For, dear Lord, since Thou have forgiven his sin agen Thee, what can I do but tread in my Master's footsteps and forgive him too!"

Then Roger he turns to poor Hans, who was cryin' into a yaller cotton handkercher, like a tender-hearted feller as he were. And says the old man, "Don't cry, Hans, I forgive you full and free. But now, if so be you've a mind to make up for the wrong you done, go and try to find my Freddie, and tell him how his father's waitin' and watchin' for him."

Well—what Hans Klettermann did, and how he did it, I can't say, but he must have worked with a will; for one day—not more'n a month later—there came by the post a letter for Roger, and as he opened it (I was in the room when it come), Hans sat by with eyes wet and glistenin'. The old man put on his spectacles, and holdin' the letter out in front of him, he read it aloud, which was soon done; for it was only just this:—

"*I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.*"

And next evenin' we was happier still, and blessin' God for His goodness, for Freddie the prodigal had come home.

* * *

A HARD WINTER.

A man with a pair of shears in his hand and a sickle over his shoulder, was leaning over a gate, looking into a large field where some once promising wheat lay battered and blown by a storm in the previous night.

"Bad job, Nicholls," said he to a person who seemed to be poking into and examining the fallen sheaves.

"Aye," replied the other, "a very bad job. I doubt we shall get little enough out of this. I'm right sorry for the master, for his potatoes is all going too."

"I'm sorry for ourselves," said the first speaker, "it will go hard for the poor with dear bread, no potatoes, and a hard winter."

"Well, you and me have no losses to fear, we get our wages and have only our own to care for. Master has got a pretty lot on his hands to do for one way and another, and bad crops will stop his kettle boiling sooner than yours and mine."

"I've been thinking we ought to stand out for a rise, Nicholls, we've got families growing up, and I can't save anything for them."

"Bring them up to work as we've done before them, Ball, and with an honest pair of hands, and a wish to do their duty, I don't fear for one of 'em."

"But you see," said Ball confidentially over the gate, "they aren't content with that, they all want to do better for themselves; there's our Bessy bothering to go to the town, and there's Jim and Bill taking to nothing at all; it wants a fortune to bring up such."

"Which is being paid in at the 'Black Bear,'" said Nicholls, looking straight into Ball's face. "You haven't done what you could to make them any better, and now you oughtn't to put the blame upon them."

"Why, what could I have done more than I have, I'd like to know?" said Ball, sulkily.

"Set them a good example, for the first and best thing," said Nicholls.

Just then a little maiden with a clean frock and apron, smooth hair, and neat sun bonnet, came tripping along the road; she smiled and nodded to Nicholls.

"I'm going now, father," said she, cheerfully.

"The Lord prosper thee, my lass," said the father.

"Where's she going? What's she after?" asked Ball.

"To see the lady up at the House; she sent for her to try if she would be likely for the nursery, as the under-nurse is gone away to help her mother at home."

"Hum—why my girl is older than yours, why couldn't she send for her, I wonder?"

Nicholls did not wonder at all, for the lady knew that the one family were industriously brought up, attended school and the house of God, and had been taught His commandments; while the other had no bringing up at all, but just grew like weeds and were always in mischief; the great teacher of neglected children providing them with plenty of it "for idle hands to do."

A clatter of horse's hoofs was heard along the road, and Ball began to trim the hedge. A gentleman pulled up at the gate and looked over at the wheat.

"I'm afraid it's done for, Nicholls," said he sadly, as the man obeyed his call.

"Well, it ain't in good condition to be sure," said Nicholls; "but, please God, we get a fine day or two, we'll perhaps make somat of it yet."

"Always hopeful, Nicholls," said his master. "Well I must try to follow your example, but I suppose you know about the bank; you've no savings there, I hope."

"Our savings is all with my lady, you know, sir," said Nicholls, quietly; "and that's safer than the bank, I take it."

And my lady had placed it with the savings of many another of the industrious workpeople—in the bank—but she would starve sooner than the loss should fall on one of them. For the bank, to the consternation of the whole country round, had stopped payment, and the evil tidings had gone in with the Squire's breakfast that morning.

He was on his way to the town, with a load of care at his heart; losses and disappointments were following one after another in quick succession. He thought of Job, and then felt ashamed, for he had a fair young family, and good health still; and though crops had failed sadly, and potatoes were rotting, and the small farmers would be behind with their rents, yet it might be worse than this, and he would make the best of it.

The failure of the bank was an awkward business indeed, because a large sum for present expenditure lay there, and the loss was very great. What was to be done? Somebody must suffer. Who should it be?

Squire Curtis was not the man to pinch others for his own relief. A morning or two later he might have been seen in his stables with his hand on the mane of a splendid horse; the creature arched his majestic neck, and laid his head over his master's shoulder, and played off his usual fondling tricks. Presently the master returned to the house, and a groom bridled the favourite horse, and trotted him off to a new home; and the Squire did not hunt that winter.

Grinding and Polishing a Large Reflector.

We have heard of the sale of a pet lamb, or a last cow, and have sympathised with the privations and tried feelings of the poor. There are those who know more about it from their own experience than some of the poor are aware of, and who are at least as worthy of sympathy and admiration.

"Couldn't we go and spend the winter abroad, papa?" asked the Squire's young daughter, after the loss at the bank, and some of its consequences had been discussed.

"And leave our people to suffer alone, Amy? Surely, that is not like you."

"I was thinking only of ourselves, papa," said Amy, blushing; "and that we could shut up the house, and save much expense."

"We might indeed do so, Amy, but it would not be right. A hard trying winter is expected. A strange disease has seized upon the cattle, and we may not escape it. Food will be dear, and if our people are not provided with work, and assisted in their need, they must starve or come on the parish. The labourers who have lived on my estate, and have always been ready to work in my service, are a part of the charge committed to me by the Almighty, and I must not, and will not forsake them. No, Amy, we will stand together; improvements must go on, work and wages must be found, come what may, and you will help your mother to consider how best to meet all needs, and do all we have been used to do, and more."

Instead of being "shut up," the house was more "open house" than ever. More clothing was cut out and made in the school, more flannel, more blankets, more coal was distributed, and none of Squire Curtis's "people" went to almshouse or parish office, though Mr. Ball and a few of his stamp had a very narrow escape of it, and grumbled a good deal because the rest refused to ask an advance of wages.

"How could we," said Nicholls, "when we see what the master has done? Do you think it cost him nothing to have that timber felled, and to see Colonel Pearson ride so proudly on the back of his own trained hunter? And isn't he at work for us all day long, consulting and planning the best to be done for all the country? Hasn't he got up the Cattle Insurance, and aren't those who've lost their cows getting milk and things off him at half the price he could get in the town for everything?"

And Nicholls' little daughter told tales, too; how the ladies had nothing new that winter, and were not going to London at all, and how some beautiful work and drawings had gone to be sold to keep up the supply of warm clothing for the poor, and how Miss Amy was to wait for the fine birthday present she would have had if things hadn't gone so badly with everybody.

And when Christmas came, though there were no parties of equals at the great house, there were feastings for the people and their children, and a Christmas-tree full of presents for them all, and the dinners that had walked about the yard or ruminated in the fields for months, found their way, as usual, to tables that otherwise had been ill-supplied.

But here and there gray hairs were noticed on the Squire's curly head, and lines of care began to mark the brow, and gather round the cheerful mouth, and his friends knew that cares and responsibilities sat heavily upon his heart.

Whoever suffered by "hard times," the Squire had borne his share for the sake of others.

VISIT TO AN OPTICAL INSTRUMENT FACTORY.

Last month we gave some account of the machines at work in the big Rathenow factories for making lenses. You can follow the process step by step. Here is the pitch-kettle, in which the rough glasses, coated with a film of pitch, are fastened on the grinding-wheel.

Next come the extensive grinding rooms, in which the steam-engine keeps dozens of wheels ceaselessly whirring round; then the rooms where the lenses, ground on one side, are taken off the wheel and fastened on a fresh one to go back to the grinding room. This is not enough — the rough-ground glasses are dull, and must be properly polished.

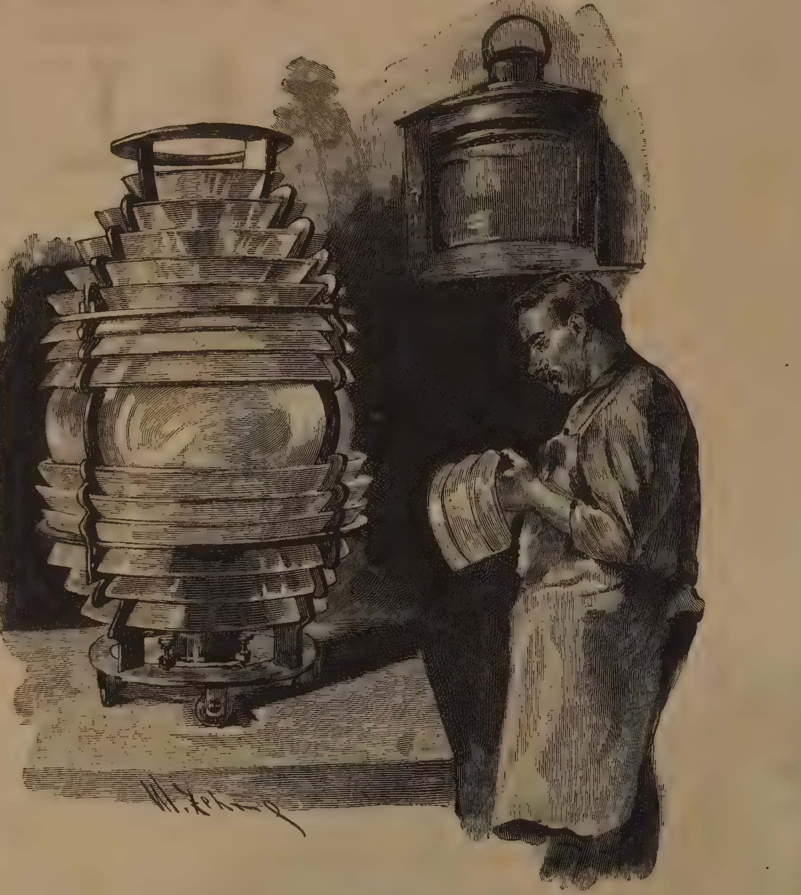
Back they go on the grinding-wheel, to be treated with polishing powder instead of emery and water, till the glass is faultlessly smooth and bright. It is wonderful to see how the sharp-sighted workmen can see at a glance when this moment arrives.

This is the ordinary process of manufacture, but other methods have to be used to make lenses of unusual shape, such as oculists often want. For instance, some eyes need a glass with a cylindrical curvature, others a prismatic lens, others a glass shaped like a mussel-shell. If you look through the catalogue of lenses in the optical manufactory you see hundreds of kinds mentioned. And this great variety of lenses shows how careful we should be in choosing spectacles for our own use, and how necessary it is to consult a good oculist.

But spectacle-making, important as it is, has for long only formed a part of the trade of Rathenow. Even Pastor Duncker himself made microscopes, which were excellent for his time. Now, all sorts of scientific instruments, from the simple magnifying glass to the most complicated mirror for viewing a person's throat, are made at the little town on the Havel.

An important manufacture is that of field and opera glasses. Not only has Rathenow beaten English and French opera glasses out of the German market, but its products are winning favour in foreign countries.

It would take too long to go into the manufacture of the frames and tubes of telescopes and field glasses. Aluminium, however, is much used from its strength and lightness.



Putting together a Lighthouse Reflector.

Lenses for telescopes and field glasses are not made like spectacle glasses—cut out of sheets of glass. They first appear as lumps of crown or flint glass. Lenses of these different materials are used to correct dispersion of colours, and make the telescope achromatic. These lumps of glass are softened in the furnace, and then pressed into shape in a mould; then they go to be ground like spectacle lenses.

There is one factory in Rathenow which makes a peculiar kind of lens. Here, alone in Germany, can be got lenses for lighthouses and electric search-lights. These are on a great scale, and yet have to be as carefully wrought as the little spectacle-glasses. Here are the big "bull's-eye" lenses, the great ring lenses, ground, polished, and set in bronze frames.

Here, too, are made the so-called "polyzonal" lenses invented by Brewster and improved by Fresnel. A cylindrical lens is surrounded by a number of concentric glass rings of prismatic section. The whole combination produces the same effect as a single enormous lens, which would be impossible to manufacture. A powerful lighthouse lamp constructed in this way can be seen from ships seven geographical miles (thirty English miles) away; and even a ship's light on this principle is plainly visible two English miles away.

The little town of Rathenow sends out every year goods to the value of 4,000,000 marks (£200,000). How much of this value is due to work we can see from the fact that a hundredweight of rough glass for spectacles costs about 100 marks (£5), and when that hundredweight has been worked up for optical purposes, it is worth 1,200 marks (£60) and over.

Surely the humble founder of this flourishing business, Parson Duncker, could never have dreamt what would come of his enterprise! The good man ended his laborious life in heavy trouble of mind and body; and now the industry which he founded in the narrow rooms of his poor parsonage enables thousands to earn their living and sends far over the sea the products of German skill and labour.

Grinding Glass Rings for Lighthouse Reflectors.

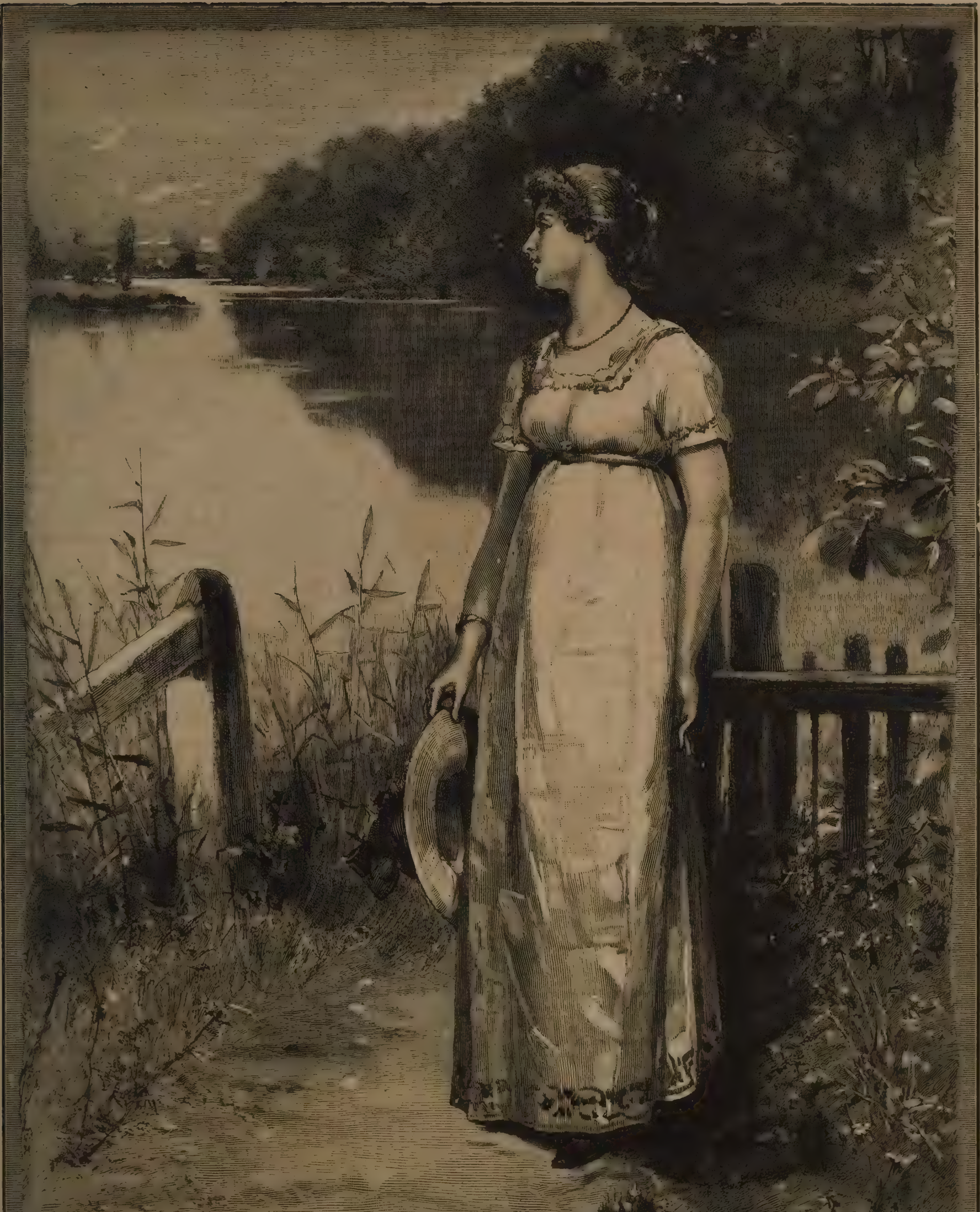
THINGS WORTH KNOWING.

Mustard, Cress, and Parsley.—Mustard and cress have been for many years in great request to eat at teatime or breakfast, with bread and butter. The sort generally preferred is *white*, but the *brown* remains much longer fit for use; its leaf is less. When sown in the open ground the beds should be very fine and in a shady place. The seed should be lightly raked in. Many gardeners make the soil very fine; then press it, give it a good watering, and sow the seed thickly on the bed, pressing it down. They cover the bed with mats to keep in the moisture.

As the mustard is cut before it makes the rough leaf, it will be advisable to make a sowing (if it is in request) at least once a week. During the winter, when a dish of mustard and cress is a treat, I have frequently seen it grown in cottage windows in pots and boxes. Four pots, two of each sort, would afford a cutting once a week.

Cress, being longer in coming up than mustard, should be sown three or four days earlier. It should be treated in every other respect like mustard. The *American cress* is not much unlike watercress in flavour. It is sown early in July, about the middle, and again in August. These sowings will give a supply from September, until the weather becomes warm, when it becomes, like the watercress, too hot to be agreeable. Mustard and cress are conducive to health.

Parsley should be sown in March, in rows a foot apart, and the roots should be thinned out to about six inches from plant. Parsley makes a very good border, and has the additional advantage of being useful as well as ornamental. In June, if the plants have become straggling, or make a show of seeding, cut them down, leaving a few for seed. The plants thus cut down will shoot afresh and will acquire a good growth before the setting in of severe weather. Some persons, who like to eat parsley like mustard and cress, will protect a row or two by covering them with straw or litter spread over them, but supported on sticks so that the litter does not touch the plants.



Standing, with reluctant feet, where the brook and river meet.

[Drawn by Davidson Knowles.

MAIDENHOOD

Maiden! with the meek, brown eyes,
In whose orbs a shadow lies
Like the dusk in evening skies!

Thou whose locks outshine the sun,
Golden tresses, wreathed in one,
As the braided streamlets run!

Standing, with reluctant feet,
Where the brook and river meet,
Womanhood and childhood fleet!

Gazing, with a timid glance,
On the brooklet's swift advance,
On the river's broad expanse!

Deep and still, that gliding stream
Beautiful to thee must seem,
As the river of a dream.

Then why pause with indecision,
When bright angels in thy vision
Beckon thee to fields Elysian?

Seest thou shadows sailing by,
As the dove, with startled eye,
Sees the falcon's shadow fly?

Hearest thou voices on the shore,
That our ears perceive no more,
Deafened by the cataract's roar?

Oh, thou child of many prayers!
Life hath quicksands,—life hath snares!
Care and age come unawares!

Like the swell of some sweet tune,
Morning rises into noon,
May glides onward into June.

Childhood is the bough, where slumbered.
Birds and blossoms many-numbered;—
Age, that bough with snows encumbered.

Gather, then, each flower that grows,
When the young heart overflows,
To embalm that tent of snows.

Bear a lily in thy hand;
Gates of brass cannot withstand
One touch of that magic wand.

Bear through sorrow, wrong, and ruth,
In thy heart the dew of youth,
On thy lips the smile of truth.

Oh, that dew, like balm, shall steal
Into wounds that cannot heal,
Even as sleep our eyes doth seal;

And that smile, like sunshine, dart
Into many a sunless heart,
For a smile of God thou art.

Longfellow.

IN A BLACKING FACTORY.

"Charity begins at home." This is a well-known and well worn maxim and no one doubts the truth of it.

Nevertheless, I have often wondered that some enterprising successor of wise Solomon has not tried to make a little variation in it, and to enforce on the minds of men the fact that "True knowledge begins at home." Yes, reader, I do remember that there is a saying —"Know thyself;" but self-knowledge is one thing, and knowledge of the nature, origin, or manufacture of the necessaries of life is quite another.

In these days of cramming heads with knowledge, how many people, who can tell you the history of old tombs and monuments, could tell you how the matches with which they light their study lamps are made?

On a pouring wet day, with the kind permission of the authorities, I found myself entering Messrs. Day & Martin's blacking manufactory.

Very often it has occurred to me to begin at the wrong end wilfully; more often, still, it has been an involuntary action on my part, and thus it was that day, for the place into which I entered was really the last scene of all.

I did the wisest thing I could think of under the circumstances—tried to see nothing as I passed through the large room on the ground-floor, and followed my guide up two flights of stairs.

As we ascended my nostrils were saluted with the odour of blacking, and I began to wonder whether it would become objectionable, but the ventilation was so good that in five minutes I had forgotten all about it.

Behold us, then, standing in a large room at the top of the building. In one corner is a lift worked by steam, whose duty it is to bring up the raw materials. Huge barrels stood about, which had been thus raised, and which contained treacle, ivory-black, oil, and the best malt vinegar.

Each of these ingredients is emptied into a large tank in the floor, measuring about twelve feet by four, and, when there, finds its way through pipes into the brewing-room below. The ivory-black, being dry, is conveyed by means of a shoot.

An opening in a board enabled me to see the black contents of one tank, and on testing it with my pencil, found it to be treacle.

The idea flashed across my mind—"Twelve feet by four of treacle, fancy being pushed into it! It would be worse than drowning in malmsey wine!" The thought was not pleasant, and I felt more comfortable when we turned our backs on the tanks.

The brewing-room was, of course, the next stage in the proceedings, but, naturally, it is a secret place, and no one is admitted. The men working there are bound to secrecy, and have entered into bonds with the firm to the effect that, in the event of breach of trust, they are to forfeit a considerable sum of money, which has been accumulating for years for their benefit. Of the brewing-room, therefore, we can say nothing beyond that the raw materials are conducted there separately as stated above, and, being judiciously mixed, they issue forth from two different sides in the shape of paste and liquid blacking.

The number of empty bottles, and crates for holding them, which we passed on leaving the tanks warned me that we were going to see the liquid department first.

Entering a long room I was particularly struck with the order and quietness which prevailed, and with the general appearance of contentment on the faces of both men and boys. There were all ages present, from fifteen to over sixty; one veteran informed me he had been fifty-two years in the firm. It has been asserted on good authority that indigo dyers are specially subject to melancholy, and scarlet dyers to fits of passion; to judge from the appearance of these blacking-makers, I should say its manufacture was conducive to long life and happiness.

Down the centre of this room was a sort of tramway raised high above our heads, and on it ran what was called the bottling-machine. Projecting from the wall at one end was a pipe which conducted the blacking from the brewing-room, and at this the machine was filled, and then it could be easily moved along by a single boy to whatever part of the room it was desired.

Several tables stood at right angles with the tramway, and it needed but a gentle push to place the long spout of the bottling-machine over whichever they pleased. Four little taps were at the end of this spout, and as many boys stood filling the bottles at them. They did this so rapidly that I fancied they must only half do it, until I poked my inquisitive nose into several and found them all quite full.

Each bottle at one table being filled, the machine is wheeled on next door, and a man comes with a basket of corks. He places one of these just on the neck of each bottle, and then he, too, goes his way. Immediately after him comes a man with a corking-machine made from a special design.

It makes no noise or fuss, but places its iron finger with a gentle pressure, and in goes the cork as tight as possible. This is done so quickly, too, that the man can cork a thousand bottles in an hour.

[TO BE CONCLUDED IN OUR NEXT.]

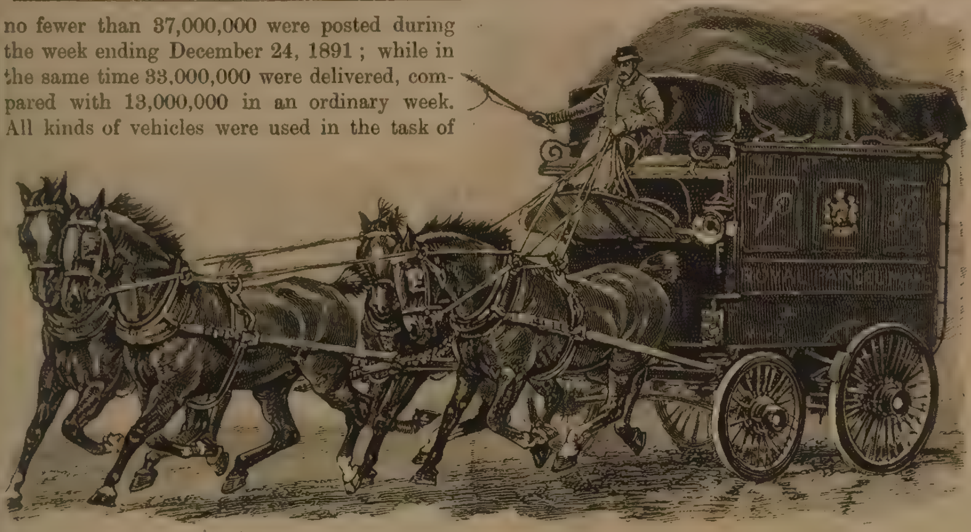
THE WORK OF THE POST OFFICE.

If we wish to send a message to any one at a distance, the method of doing so is, now-a-days, so simple and cheap, that our forefathers of a hundred years ago might well turn in their graves with envy. At the trifling cost of a penny for a stamp, or a still lower sum for a post-card, we drop our message into the post-box, confident that the department will deliver it at the address it bears, with no further trouble to us whatever. Before Sir Rowland Hill introduced the penny post, in 1840, such a service would have cost many shillings.

This cheap rate of postage has greatly multiplied the number of letters sent; and now that the Post Office undertakes the carriage of parcels as well, the total work done is enormous. At such a season as Christmas, when nearly everybody sends greetings to others, sometimes accompanied by more substantial tokens of goodwill, the ordinary staff of the Post Office has to be assisted by a number of outsiders engaged for the time.

And each year the work grows heavier. Last Christmas—says a writer in the *Standard*—no fewer than 4,634 extra hands were taken on, or nearly 600 more than at Christmas, 1890. These included many discharged soldiers and policemen off duty. Among the former was a Victoria Cross hero—Serjeant Palmer—one of the few who survived the disastrous fight at Majuba Hill.

The need for this extra help is shown by the fact that, in the London district alone, where about 13,500,000 letters are posted every week no fewer than 37,000,000 were posted during the week ending December 24, 1891; while in the same time 33,000,000 were delivered, compared with 13,000,000 in an ordinary week. All kinds of vehicles were used in the task of distribution —from the huge pantechnicon van to the little pony-cart.



Great carelessness, or something worse, on the part of some people is shown by the fact that every week in London the overcharges on letters insufficiently stamped amount to £675. At Christmas-time a special force was employed to pick out these letters, with the result that the overcharges during the week amounted to £2,000!

What caused more inconvenience than anything else, however, was the four days' fog just before Christmas. One of the strangest experiences was that which befel the Brighton parcel coach on its journey to London, on the morning of December 22. The coachman drove straight into the pond on Thornton Heath, through mistaking a lamp on the dividing wall of the water for one on the roadside.

Although the wall is fully fifteen yards from the edge of the pond, the coach was travelling at such a quick pace that all four horses mounted the parapet, and no little difficulty was experienced in freeing them. The coach, however, was not upset, but the driver, an old servant of the contractor, dislocated his shoulder in falling from his seat, and was sent to London by train.

Fresh horses had to be procured before the coach could be rescued, and, this accomplished, the guard pluckily drove it to London, although his clothes had, in the meantime, been frozen to his body.

Providentially, no accident occurred to any of the postmen engaged at the London Docks. Fully twenty labourers fell from the quays and were drowned during the fog; and the authorities of the Post Office wisely decided to furnish life-belts to all the letter-carriers whose duty took them to the ships in dock. This precaution prevented loss of life.

Among the many curious experiences related by the drivers of the mailcarts, was that of a man who accidentally drove into a private road which was so narrow that he was compelled to borrow the key of a gentleman's grounds in order to get room to turn his van. This driver was four hours late on his journey, the frost adding to his difficulties, and he only got back in safety by tying his horses' hoofs in cloth, and going a roundabout way with the tramway lines as his guide.

TINKER, TAILOR, AND THE REST OF THEM; or, MRS. WATSON'S SEVEN LODGERS.

No. III. Soldier.

Mr. and Mrs. Bross was our third set, and a likely looking married couple as ever you see, and that fond of each other, as turtledoves was nothin' to it But my Jacob, he says to me, a week after they'd moved in—"Wife," says he, "them two is unequal yoked, and there ll be trouble afore long."

So then I laughs, and says I, "Why, Jacob, what a croaker you be! What's your reasons for thinkin so?"

"It's two or three little things as I goes by," says he, "but I won't say no more, wife. I'll leave you to find out for yourself; and if I'm mistook, my dear, why then no one won't be better pleased than me."

Well, it wasn't long afore I see that Jacob was right, as he 'most always generally is. Kittie Bross, pretty as she was, seemed idle and dressy. She called me into her room one mornin' to see a bonnet she was trimmin' with sky blue ribbons, and pink roses, and a lot more finery. But when I come to look round, there I finds the bed not made, the dust lyin' thick everywhere, and little Mrs. Kittie herself in a dirty print jacket, with her hair hangin' down her back. It was clear enough that her fine bonnet had put everythink else out of her head.

Then, too, she'd a child's sweet tooth for goodies, and often I see her eatin' cakes and chocolate at eleven c'clock in the mornin', and spoilin' her appetite for a good wholesome dinner with her husband, to say nothin' of wastin' his money for trash.

But this wasn't all. Though Harry Bross was a blue ribbon man, and kept to it sacred, Kittie, she wouldn't do without her glass of ale at dinner and supper; and presently she got a habit of takin' it between meals whenever she fancied it. She had a little cask in, when they first came to us, but that was empty in no time, and then she took to goin' to the public-house with a jug. Well, she went more and more frequent, and things got wuss all the time at home.

One night I heard Harry say, "Why, Kit, my gal, what *have* you been doin' all day? The room's all in a mess, and you look as if you'd just come out of the coal-hole."

"I wasn't very well this mornin', Harry," says Kittie, "and, so I got behind with my work," says she; and Harry, he says no more. But I begun to notice that on Sunday—save when she had a new bonnet or gown—she didn't go to church with her husband; and when he'd gone, she'd shut herself up, and come out after an hour or two, lookin' very queer. At first I didn't understand, and thought she was ill; but one day I see her comin' in from the public, and beside the brown jug, she was carryin', half hid under her shawl, a big bottle, and then I couldn't help knowin' how things was goin'. She was a woman as had never learned to deny herself nothin' she craved, and so it came about that she throwed away Harry's earnin's, lost her self-respect, and neglected her husband and her home, through drink.

Pretty soon all the lover-like ways was gone between 'em, and now and again there was high words and black looks, when meals wasn't ready, or all the buttons was off his shirt, or his socks that torn as he didn't rightly know which end to put his foot in. But somehow he didn't seem to see what it was that had changed Kittie so, and that now it was the drink-fiend as had got hold of her, and was makin' her to serve with rigour, as them cruel 'Gyptian task-masters did the poor Israelites afore Moses up and led 'em forth. But one evenin' Kittie she must have been tempted to take more 'n common, for as soon as Harry come in, I hear him callin' loud and sharp, "Mrs. Watson, please have the goodness to come here." I run to him at once, and find him standin' by the bed. And lyin' there in a drunken sleep, was Kittie, her pretty face flushed and swollen, and her little hands still holdin' on to the neck of a bottle.

Well, Harry, he looks at her for one moment, and then he turns to me with eyes that pitiful, as I could have wept only to see him.

"Mrs. Watson," says he, in a voice that weren't like his own—"What can I do? God knows things was bad enough afore, but now—" and there he broke down, and sobbed like a child.

Seein' him so overcome, I comforted him the best I could, and sent him to have tea with Jacob. Then I bathed Kittie's face with cold water, and undressed her, and put her to bed, talkin' to her the while as solemn as I knowed how, tellin' her how grievous she was sinnin' against the Lord as well as against Harry. And the poor young thing cried and promised to be better, and when Harry came up, I left 'em together to make it up.

After that things went better for a bit, but it wasn't for long. The very same thing happened again in a month's time, though Harry and me had done all we could to break her of the habit. At last it got so that Harry couldn't trust her with his wages at all, but handed 'em to me to do the best I could for both him and Kittie, which same I did, as well as I knowed how, all the while tryin' to keep her from the evil as was ruinin' her body and soul.

But she were that crafty, she managed to run out and pawn her clothes one by one for gin; and then, when her husband came home,

Old Nathan could tell him about the dear father that died

either she 'd be dead asleep, or she 'd storm and scold and scream — not being in her right mind—till the poor feller was well-nigh mad.

Well, one night he didn't come home as usual, but by the last post I gets a letter from him. As near as I can call to mind, it was these words :—

"*Dear Mrs. Watson, my heart's broke, my life's spoilt. I can't bear it no more at home. I 'm a-goin'—I'm gone to enlist. You've got money of mine—please spend it for what my wife needs, and do what you can for her. As soon as may be, I'll send you some more cash, so as you shan't be at no expense. There's fightin' goin' on in Africa, or will be soon, and if only they'd send me out, how glad I'd be, more special if a bullet was to make a end of me. But till then, with my love to you and your husband,*

I'm yours grateful,
Harry Bross."

I 'm certain sure that nothin' less of a blow would have brought Kittie to her senses, but this did, and when she heard the news of Harry's enlistin', she took on dreadful. But after that come real repentance and a longin' to be better.

"Help me, Mrs. Watson," she says, as humble as a child. "I'm so wicked and so weak."

"I will, my dear," says I; "but there's other help you must seek—help that's better worth havin' than mine. Kittie, ain't it the dear Lord Hisself as said, '*Without Me ye can do nothing?*'"

The weeks and months went on, and how that poor young thing prayed and fought against her besettin' sin! I helped her all I could, never lettin' her out alone; and often when she 'd the cravin' strong upon her, I 'd bring her a cup of good coffee, or a glass of ginger tea to stay her a bit. It must have been about four months after Harry left, that Kittie's little boy was born. A dear baby he were, and she named him Henry after his father, but always called him little Hal.

Harry Bross had his wish, in part. Men as wasn't too young was wanted out in Africa, and after the shortest time of teachin' and drillin' possible, he went along of a lot more in a big troopship. In course we let him know of his boy's birth, and of the change in Kittie too, and he wrote back very lovin' and tender to her, wishin' he hadn't been so hasty enlistin', but sayin' that as he had he must do his dooty now like a man, and only prayed the Lord to spare him to see his wife and child afore he died.

Dear friends, this is a sad story, but I'm bound to tell it, if only to show that sin must bring sorrow, and that the breakin' of the Almighty's laws is follered by pain, even when the Lord has forgiven the sin.

Harry Bross hadn't been such a great while away when we heard that in a fight one of his legs was hurt so bad that it had to be took off. He got over it, but in course he couldn't be a soldier no more after that, and the next news as reached us was that he was a-comin' home.

But when he got to us, we could hardly believe as how this poor cripple was the fine, strong, well set up young chap as left us hardly two years afore. Still, Kittie were so glad to get him, and he was so happy to be with her and the boy, that it were quite a movin' sight to see 'em together. And as Harry was a clean, handy man, and could get about on a wooden leg, he was able to earn enough to keep the three of 'em.

But now came the saddest bit of my story. That winter there was a many cases of fever down in our part, and Harry Bross, who 'd had fever out in Africa, and hadn't never quite got over it, sickened with it all at once, as though he 'd been struck down by a blow. From the first it seemed to me as though there wasn't any hope, but Kittie she hoped right up to the end, so when he passed away, it were a terrible shock, for her heart was bound up in her husband, which they'd loved each other far dearer since the trial of his goin' away to be a soldier. But her trust in the Lord stayed and comforted her, and as the time passed and little Hal growed up a bright bonny boy, and just like his father, her heart became more peaceful, and her face had a quiet, waitin' look, as if she knowed it would only be a little while afore she joined her husband.

And how very glad she was when by chance, through a friend, she found out that at Chelsea Hospital there was an old soldier, who just afore he left the service and was sent home, knowed Harry quite well, and had many a tale to tell of him, as warmed the poor young widder's heart. So often on a summer's afternoon Kittie would take little Hal, and pay a visit to the Hospital, and there the child learned all that old Nathan Spearman could tell him about the dear father as died while Hal was little more nor a baby.

And now my story 's done; but oh! if any young wife should happen to read it, I would say to her, "My dear, take warnin' by Kittie Bross that spoiled her husband's life and her own by self-indulgence and yieldin' to temptation. Remember, the little beginnin's of sin is not to be despised as countin' for nothin', since for evil, as for good, the little things often grows to be biggest of all." *Mary E. Ropes.*

THE OLD MINE SHAFT.

A Dangerous Spot—A Scene in the Black Forest.

A TOWNSMAN of Badenweiler, in the duchy of Baden, named Mehlin, the father of a poor family, was sent one evening in June, after eight o'clock, with an important dispatch to Staufen, a place in the Black Forest. The path, about three miles in length, passed through the wood over mountains and valleys. He ought to have been home early the following morning, but he was vainly expected the whole of the following day, which caused his family no little trouble and anxiety.

A second messenger was sent to Staufen, and when he returned with the tidings that Mehlin had never arrived there, nothing appeared more certain than that either he had been murdered in the thick forest, or had lost his life by some unfortunate accident. The anguish of the wife and children of this poor man, when all means to find him had proved fruitless, may be imagined.

Two nights had already passed, and the third day, Whit Sunday, arrived, and all the search and inquiry had been in vain. The hope of finding even the body of the missing man was given up, and the poor family was in a hopeless condition. Thus far the Lord suffered it to come to pass, that He might show the more manifestly His almighty power and goodness.

On this third day, the woodcutter Karrar had to go to Staufen on business. It struck him that up in the mountain there was the shaft of an old mine, and that it was possible that the missing man had fallen into it in the night and thus lost his life. So now he ascended the mountain side and came to the fearful abyss. Here he remarked a place where the moss and brushwood which grew round the edge were torn away, and this he recognised as a probable trace of a fall into the chasm below.

He approached nearer and nearer to the edge, as far as he dared venture without danger, and listened to catch any sound proceeding from below—but all in vain. He then let a little stone fall down the chasm, upon which hollow sounds proceeded from below. Now he cried down with a loud voice, "Who 's there below?" and the answer came up through the rocky clefts, "Mehlin of Badenweiler."

What a discovery! Karrar promised to fetch help for him at once, and ran back with great haste to Badenweiler with the news that Mehlin was lying in the shaft still alive. Many men hurried with Karrar to the spot. They had provided themselves with ropes and a ladder. The ladder was fastened to a rope, and then let down into the shaft.

A young man succeeded in letting himself down into the chasm. Here he first gave the exhausted man a reviving drink, then bound him firmly to the ladder, and climbed up again safely by the rope. The ladder was then drawn up with the unfortunate man attached to it.

The rescued man said that he had reached Salzburg safely, and from thence had chosen a shorter way through the mountains, in order to cut off a piece of the road, and thus to reach Staufen earlier. Full of ardour to bring the letter to the appointed place as quickly as possible, and knowing nothing of the old shaft, he had approached it too closely and fallen into the abyss. Here he lay stunned for a long time. He only came to his senses for a few minutes now and then, and always sank back into his former state.

When his consciousness completely returned, he was seized with the most frightful horror, for how could he think of escape out of this dark pit in the midst of a wilderness? But he cried, with the psalmist, "out of the depths to the Lord, who doeth as He pleases in the earth, and in the sea, and in all deep places."

The bad air in the shaft oppressed him, but the thought of his wife and children roused his spirit. He was at last almost in despair when the stone fell down from his deliverer's hand, and directly afterwards he heard his voice, which sounded to him as that of an angel.

This incident surely teaches us never to doubt, either in small or great things, the watchful and overruling Providence which directs the lot of every individual. It was God who put that thought into the heart of the deliverer, and sent him to that place. It also teaches us never, even in the most desperate circumstances, to restrain prayer to the Lord, who may deliver from temporal, and will deliver assuredly from spiritual danger and death, all who cry unto Him in faith.

ONLY ONE WAY.

I WAS standing by the dying bed of a very aged man when his daughter said to me, "Ah, sir, if any one goes to heaven he will; he has led such a good life."

"Without pardon," I replied, "the best man living can never enter heaven; and with pardon, the worst man cannot fail to reach there. There is only *one* way."

I fear, however, that it is very commonly believed that there are at least two ways to heaven. One way by leading a good life, as it is called; and the other by being pardoned by God after leading a bad one. But this is an utter delusion.

Many ways there may be to obtain the riches, honours, and pleasures of this world; but there is only one way to secure the inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

The Bible is our only guide to heaven, but it is a sure and certain guide. Without its guidance men have groped after immortal happiness, but groped in vain. Guessing and hoping was all the wisest could attain unto.

Life and immortality are brought to light by the Gospel, which tells us of one Saviour, and "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

It tells us of one Sacrifice for sin, but that one is all sufficient: for "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." It tells us of one Way; for Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by Me." "He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already."

The Bible not only tells us of one way to heaven, but it tells us there is no other way. Speaking of Jesus, it says, "Neither is there salvation in any other." It tells us, "All have sinned," "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags," "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us."

It is true that good works will surely follow faith and pardon as the natural and necessary results; but good works will never obtain the pardon of sin. Doing our duty to-day will not atone for the neglect of it yesterday. Keeping the laws to-day will not procure us forgiveness for having broken them yesterday.

There is only one way to heaven; but, thank God, that way is sure and certain. Jesus said, "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out." And it is open to all, to young and old, rich and poor, learned and ignorant. "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

"Come to Calvary's holy mountain,
Sinners, ruined by the fall!
Here a pure and healing fountain
Flows to you, to me, to all,
In a full, perpetual tide,
Opened when our Saviour died."

OUR FATHER'S CARE.

Unchanging is the Father's care for you,
Each faltering step He watches tenderly;
With everlasting love and favour true,
Guiding thy life's pathway eternally.

Unchanging is the Father's love for you,
Unlike the world's weak show of sympathy,
That lingers here and there in hearts so few
Coming like fleeting thought's uncertainty.

Unchanging is the Father's peace for you,
Abiding deep in joyous ecstasy;
"Not as the world giveth, give I to you,
Be not afraid," He says repeatedly.

Unchanging is the Father's joy for you,
Glimpses on earth of heaven's felicity;
Ever each evening fresh, each morning new,
It fills our hearts in song continually.

Unchanging are His promises and true,
Why mourn if earthly scenes are seemingly
For ever changing? here remains for you
The kingdom of His love eternally.

Annie L. Thomson.

A WONDERFUL DELIVERANCE.

Among the early labours of the Church of the "United Brethren," or Moravians, for the conversion of the heathen, was a mission to South America. In June, 1738, two of their number, named Louis Dachne and John Guettner, sailed from Holland for Berbice. Having, on their arrival, found no opportunity of instructing the negroes there they removed into the interior, and formed a settlement, which they called Pilgerhut, in the neighbourhood of the Indians.

In less than twenty years, the number of Indians who resided with the Brethren amounted to upwards of two hundred and sixty.

After some time the neighbourhood was visited with a severe scarcity, which lasted for several years, and was followed by an epidemic, the melancholy results of which were the dispersion of the inhabitants of the colony, and the death of numbers among them.

Among those who survived was Louis Dachne, a man of energy and zeal. Not disheartened by all the toil of twenty years' labour, he, with one of his brethren, obtained from the governor of Berbice permission to settle in the country, and two pieces of ground were granted to them by the government for that purpose.

Before very long Dachne's companion fell dangerously ill; and the Indian doctors who passed by told him that he would never recover if he continued to live with the white man, who was under the power of the devil, and would himself likewise soon turn sick.

The poor fellow, as soon as he got a little better, forsook his teacher and retired among his own countrymen. Thus was the missionary left alone in the heart of a strange country, on the banks of a river bordered by swamps, which generated an atmosphere fatal to the European constitution.

During his stay in this solitude, Dachne was frequently in want of the common necessaries of life. Often he rose in the morning not knowing whether he should taste a morsel during the whole day. Yet Providence so ordered it that repeatedly, when he could no longer bear the cravings of hunger, some Indians arrived, who divided with him their handful of food.

For about two years did he remain thus forsaken without either friend or companion; yet he was contented and happy. "My Saviour," said he, "was always with me, and comforted my soul by His gracious presence; so that I can truly say I spent my time in happiness and peace."

Besides the dangers and trials Dachne suffered from privation and from the enmity of the natives, he was often in no small peril from wild beasts, serpents, and other animals. A tiger for a long time kept watch near his hut. Every night it made the forest resound with its roaring; and though he kindled a large fire in the neighbourhood before he retired to rest, yet, as it was often extinguished before the morning, it would have proved but an insufficient defence had not the arm of the Lord protected him.

"Faithful is He who has promised," and if He sees fit to interpose, nothing can touch His servants to harm them. If engaged about His work they may fearlessly sing—

"Who shall divide us from *His* love,
Or what should tempt us to despair?
Shall persecution, or distress,
Famine, or pain, or nakedness?
He who hath loved us bears us through,
And makes us more than conquerors too."

BEING IN GOD'S WAY.

Nelly Gray was a very old woman, and had been for many years quite deaf. She was, besides, getting infirm, and had something to do to walk, even with the help of a stick. On this account she seldom left her home, which was a little cottage that looked almost like a hut. She used to sit all the week knitting stockings, which she sold to a few charitable persons in the village, who were always ready to take them.

Nelly, though she lived by herself, was very happy and contented. Her great Bible lay on the table beside her, and when she was tired of knitting she would read in it about the love of Christ and the blessedness of heaven. Nelly hoped to go to heaven when she died, and her hope was well founded. For many years she had believed in Jesus, and trusted all her affairs to His hands; and she knew that He would not cast her off in the time of old age, or forsake her when her strength failed.

Every Sabbath morning, let the weather be what it might, the neighbours saw Nelly making her way to the house of God. Before the service began she had taken her place close to the pulpit stairs, and though she could not hear a word that was spoken, it seemed a happy time to her.

The neighbours often wondered she should go, since her deafness prevented her understanding what was said. They did not know how many joyful seasons Nelly had experienced in God's house, before this affliction happened to her. And that now, though shut out from the sound of the preacher's voice, as he talked of Christ and Him crucified, she could still have communion with that gracious Saviour, and find it good to be there.

"Besides," said she to one of these neighbours, "I know God is to be found where His people meet, and I like to put myself in His way." It is a happy thought that God can be found in His house, and that His waiting people can meet with Him there. He has promised to bless the provision of His house, and to satisfy His poor with bread. Surely it is no light thing to neglect this precious opportunity, or to let a trifle stand between us and being in God's way.

But it should be remembered that merely attending in God's house is of little avail unless we heartily join in His service. We may sit as His people sit, and hear as His people hear, but if we have not come hungering and thirsting after righteousness our souls may go empty away. An old divine has called this kind of worship, "a shuffling of feet between four walls, where neither God nor the soul are present."

Let us pray for the hearing ear and the understanding heart, let us humbly wait upon God in all the means of grace, which He has appointed. He will prepare our hearts to receive His Word, so that it may make us wise unto salvation. Then shall we go up with joyful feet to worship in His temple, and find that a day in His courts is better than a thousand. We shall be able to say, "Lord, I have loved the habitation of Thine house, and the place where Thine honour dwelleth."

AN UNEXPECTED PROTECTOR.

It is related of the late Rev. Dr. Robert Newton, that his path of duty being through a district where he had enemies who intended personal violence to him, he committed himself to the care of God and went to his work.

As he entered the place where mischief was threatened him, he found walking at his side a huge dog, the sight of which warned all enemies to keep at a distance. His unknown companion kept closely by him all the way, but disappeared as suddenly and mysteriously as he had come when the chances of injury were past.

Dr. Newton was far from being superstitious. He did not fail to recognise, however, in the presence of his four-footed friend a defender of God's providing.

The promises—"He will keep the feet of His saints," "The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in"—were in this case literally fulfilled.

INSECT-EATING PLANTS.

What! I have heard of insects feeding on plants, but I never heard of plants feeding on insects! Surely there must be some mistake!

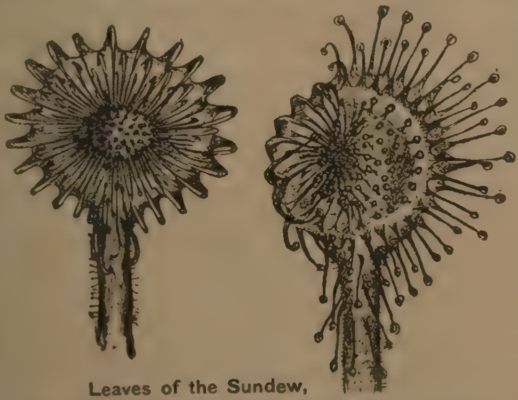
Every moment we live some part of our bodies is wearing out; every movement we make grinds off, as it were, some tiny bits of bone and muscle. The brain wears out by thinking, and the lungs are exercised, and consequently worn out, by the simple act of breathing. These minute pieces of waste tissue are taken up by the blood and carried along the veins to the heart.

Venus' Fly-trap.

By taking in nourishment in the form of food or drink, we supply new material to replace this worn-out tissue. Whatever we eat or drink is acted upon by the digestive juices, which separate the nourishing part from that which is useless. The nourishment is taken into the blood, conveyed along the arteries to that part of the body where it is required, and there laid down. Then comes the mystery which the wisest men cannot solve—how this lifeless matter which was taken into the body becomes a living part of it.

Thus fresh matter is supplied; but how is the waste got rid of? By the process of breathing, which, if in good health, we carry on unconsciously every moment of our lives. The air we breathe consists mainly of two gases—oxygen and nitrogen. By means of a delicate network of vessels, the fresh air taken into the lungs comes in contact with the particles of carbon in the blood. What happens?

The oxygen and the carbon unite, that is, *burn*. Burn! Yes; the process is the same as that which takes place when we burn a fire in a grate. The oxygen of the air unites with the carbon of which the fuel is composed, and together they form carbonic acid gas. When a chemical union of this kind takes place, *heat* is usually generated. Thus our bodies and our rooms are warmed on the same principle.



Leaves of the Sundew,

One showing the sensitive tentacles bending over a piece of meat; in the other the tentacles are entirely closed over the object.

The poisonous carbonic acid gas we breathe out again; and the blood, having got rid of its waste matter, is again pumped by the heart through the arteries, to go through the same process over and over again.

But now comes another consideration. If we are continually taking in fresh air, and breathing out a poisonous gas, will not all the air at length become impure?

Here God's providence is manifested. Another order of living creatures—plants—require for their nourishment just that poisonous gas that animals wish to get rid of. Plants breathe by means of their pores, and green plants possess the power, under the influence of sunlight, of splitting up the carbonic acid gas into the two elements of which it is composed. The carbon it takes to itself and uses to build itself up. The oxygen, which the plant does not want, it breathes out again into the air, thus keeping the latter fresh and wholesome, and fitted to support animal life.

Some plants, however, such as mushrooms and others of similar kinds, do not possess green colour, and so cannot take in carbonic acid gas and split it up and retain the carbon for food as the green plants do. Thus they have need of organic matter, which they obtain in a state of decay, while they breathe in oxygen and breathe out carbonic acid gas, in this resembling animals.

It is not possible, however, to draw a hard and fast line between the two classes of plants. As is so often the case in nature, specimens are met with which seem to belong to *both* classes. Thus, some green plants require animal food besides the inorganic nourishment obtained from the earth and air.

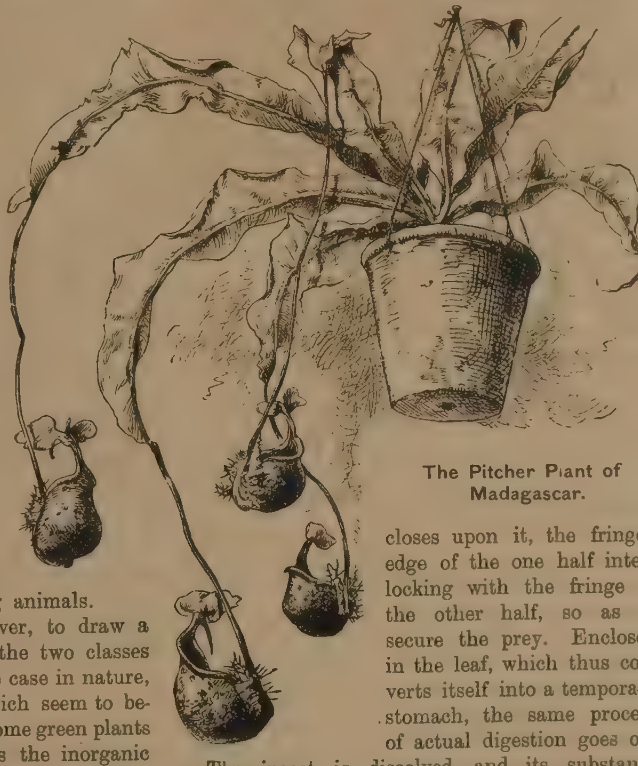
The mistletoe, for instance, grows on other plants, and sucks up the sap which its host is manufacturing for itself; others, again, lay traps for insects, and not only capture the little animals, but digest them by a process similar to that whereby our own stomachs play a part in digesting our food.

Look, for example, at the sundew, of which we give an illustration. On examining a sundew leaf, we see that it is studded over with little hairs or tentacles, at the tips of which are drops of some gummy liquid. These tentacles are highly sensitive—nay, more, they can distinguish between different objects in a way marvellous to behold.

When a fly alights on the sundew's leaf it becomes entangled in the sticky fluid, the tentacles bend over so as to fix it to the leaf, and it perishes, thus captured as a victim by the plant. If a small piece of meat or other digestible object be placed on the leaf, the latter will behave as with the fly, whereas, if anything indigestible, such as a piece of glass, be offered to the leaf, the tentacles take no notice of it whatever. Who can explain this discerning power?

The fly seized by the sundew is truly digested. There is poured out upon it a digestive fluid somewhat similar to that of an animal, and all the nourishing part is duly digested and goes to feed the tissues of the plant. What is indigestible is blown off the leaf when the tentacles once more stand erect, ready to seize fresh prey.

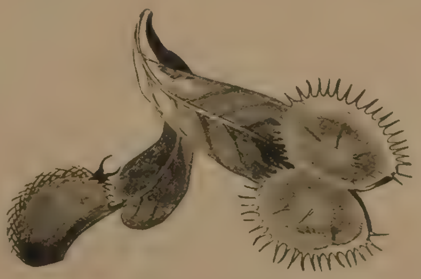
Perhaps even more striking is the action of the Venus' fly-trap, a plant whose native place is the North American marshes. The leaf has fringed edges and a broad stalk, its surface being divided into halves. On the surface of each half are three sensitive hairs.



The Pitcher Plant of Madagascar.

When an insect touches a hair, the leaf closes upon it, the fringed edge of the one half interlocking with the fringe of the other half, so as to secure the prey. Enclosed in the leaf, which thus converts itself into a temporary stomach, the same process of actual digestion goes on. The insect is dissolved, and its substance absorbed by the plant.

Like the sundew, the Venus' fly-trap has leaves and roots of its own, and both can therefore feed themselves, as do other and ordinary plants. Yet it is clear that the habit of insect-feeding has become part and parcel of their nature, since they do not flourish naturally or completely when insect-food is denied them. Other plants, such as the pitcher-plant, and the butterwort and bladderwort of our marshes and streams, also capture insects, the latter even enclosing minnows in its "bladders," which are like eel-traps, permitting the prey to enter easily, but preventing its escape.



Leaves of Venus Fly-trap.

THE HORRORS OF WAR.

Forcing the Passage of the Danube.

THE first serious fighting in the campaign (the Russo-Turkish War) occurred on that June morning when General Dragomiroff's division of the Russian army forced the passage of the Danube under the fire of the Turkish batteries about Sistova. Of that crossing it happened that I was the only correspondent who was a spectator.

It was about midnight when we threaded our way through the chaos in the streets of Simnitza, and at length made our way down into the willow-grove on the Danube side, where Yolchine's brigade was waiting until the pontoon boats should be ready for its embarkation.

It was a strange weird time. The darkness was so dense that nothing could be seen around one; and the Turkish bank was only just to be discerned looming black and dark up against the hardly less dark and sullen sky.

Stumbling forward, through mud and over roots, I struck against something like a wall; yet the wall was soft and warm. It was a column of soldiers, silent and motionless till the time should come to move. Not a light was permitted, not even a cigarette was allowed to be smoked.

When men spoke at all it was in whispers, and there was only a soft hum of low talk, half drowned by the gurgle of the Danube, and broken occasionally by the splash caused by the launching of a pontoon boat.

The gray dawn faintly began to break. I could dimly discern Dragomiroff, mud almost to the waist, directing the marshalling of the pontoon boats, close to the water's edge. Here come the Avengers, a stern silent band, the cross in silver standing out from the sombre fur of their caps. They have the place of honour in the first boat. As it is pulling off, Liegnitz, the gallant German attaché, darts forward and leaps on board.

The stalwart linesmen of Yolchine's brigade are managing the other boats. The strong strokes of the sailors shoot us into the stream. The gloom of the night is waning fast, and now we can faintly discern, across the broad swirl of water, the crags of the Turkish bank and the steep slope above.

What if the Turks are there in force? A grim precipice that, truly, to carry at the bayonet point, in the teeth of a determined enemy! And an enemy is there, sure enough, and on the alert. There is a flash out of the gloom, and the near whistle and scream of a shell thrills us, as it speeds over us and bursts among the men in the willows behind us.

There follows shell after shell, from due opposite, from higher up, and from the knoll still higher up, close to which the minarets of Sistova are now dimly visible. The shells are falling and bursting on the surface of the Danube; they splash us with the spray they raise; their jagged splinters fly yelling by us. There is no shelter; we must stand here in the open boat—this densely-packed mass of men—and take what fortune heaven may send us.

The face of the Danube, pitted with falling shells, is flecked, too, with craft loaded to the gunwale. Hark to that crash, the splintering of wood, and the riving of iron, there, on our starboard quarters! A huge pontoon, laden with guns and gunners, has been shot by a shell. It heaves heavily twice; its stern rises; there are wild cries—a confused turmoil of men and horses struggling in the water; the guns sink, and drowning men drift by us with the current down to their death.

From out the foliage, now, in the little cove for which we are heading, belches forth volley after volley of musketry fire, helping the devilry of the shells. Several men of our company are down ere our craft touches the mud of the Danube shore. The "Avengers" are already landed: so is Yolchine, with a handful of his linesmen.

As we tumble out of the boats with the bullets whizzing about our heads, and swarm up on to the bank, we are bidden by energetic orders, and not less energetic gestures, to lie down. We fall prone in the thick glutinous slime, under the cover of a little bank. Already, dead and wounded men lie here thick among the living. Boat after boat disembarks its freight.

At length Yolchine thinks he has men enough. He, who, with young Skobeleff, has never lain down, gives the word, and the two spring up the ascent; a billow of strong supple Russian soldiers, released from restraint, surges with resistless rush up the steep bank. The detachment of Turkish militiamen holding the post are overwhelmed, but they do not run. No; they die where they stand, neither quailing nor asking for quarter.

For that brave band of Mustaphis, Abdul Kerim Pasha unconsciously furnished a noble epitaph. "They have never been heard of since," he wrote. No, nor will they, till the last trumpet sounds! *Archibald Forbes.*

THE JOY OF DOING GOOD.

YOU'VE made no enemies you say?
Alas! my friend, the boast is poor.
He who has mingled in the fray of duty
Must have made foes; if you have none,
Small is the work that you have done;
You've dashed no cup from perjured lip,
You've smote no traitor on the hip,
You've never set the Wrong to right,
You've been a coward in the fight.

"Highest aim and true endeavour;
Earnest work with patient might;
Hoping, trusting, singing ever,
Battling bravely for the right;
Loving God, all men forgiving,
Helping weaker feet to stand:
These will make a life worth living,
Make it noble, make it grand."

Yes, there's a joy in doing good
The selfish never know;
A draught so deep, so rich and pure,
It sets the heart aglow;
A draught so exquisitely rare,
It thrills the soul with bliss,
And lifts it to a heavenly world,
Or makes a heaven of this.

NAT, THE QUARRYMAN.

By Eglanton Thorne,

Author of "Nathan Quilter's Fall," etc.

Chapter VII.—Dashed Hopes.

IT was not much past mid-day when Nat Youlton strode away from the widow's cottage. He had taken advantage of his dinner hour to pay his two visits and had meant to return to his work; but now he was in no mind to do this. A mood of reckless desperation was upon him. He was mad with himself for having uttered words which he had known at the time it was vain to utter. He told himself he was a fool to imagine for a moment there was such a chance for him, a chance of beginning a new life, bright with love and trust, of showing himself a steady workman, of winning a good name and the favour and respect of his neighbours. No, the past could not be undone; long ago he had gone to the bad and he must follow the downward path he had chosen to the bitter end. There could be no turning back now; he must go on as he had begun. But the star of hope that for a brief period had shone on him had been very precious. It was hard to see it extinguished, hard to be plunged back into the darkness. And in Nat Youlton's nature despair quickly engendered lawlessness. He did not care what he did; he was ready for any wickedness as he marched out of Trevena and took the familiar road to the "Sportsman's Arms."

On the following morning the Parson riding up the village drew in his quiet nag at the door of Mrs. Rush's cottage. That good woman was at hand, and hearing his voice came hurrying out. She told him that Miss Trotter and her aunt were at home, helped him to alight, and called one of her children to hold his horse.

"I have come to say good-bye," said Mr. Trelawney as he entered the lodgers' little parlour. "You are really going to-morrow?"

"Yes, indeed; we must," said Miss Trotter with a sigh; "I cannot tell you how sorry I am to leave Trevena."

"I am sorry to think of losing you," he replied; "but you must come again next summer. You have had the best of the weather now, I believe; there is going to be a change. Ah, see, it is raining already. It is well the corn is nearly all gathered in."

"It looks very dark over the sea and the wind is rising," said Miss Trotter.

"Yes; we shall have rough weather soon. But look what I have brought you. What do you think of these?" And he produced some fine photographs of the old castle and the ruined chapel on the cliff.

Both ladies pronounced them excellent.

"I knew you would like them," said the old man; "they were taken by a grandson of mine, who has quite a craze for photography. He does them splendidly for an amateur. Look at this one now; the old altar comes out well. You remember my telling you about the skeleton that was found in the tomb beneath? Well, I believe I have discovered who was buried there."

Once launched on this fascinating subject the vicar's words were not few. There was nothing he more enjoyed than talking of his antiquarian researches. Miss Trotter listened with all the patience she could muster as he went again over the old ground, repeating facts that he had already told her many times. She even simulated an interest in them which led him to enter more fully into details, for she felt for the poor old man who led such a companionless life. But at last even her patience was exhausted, and she took advantage of a pause in his garrulity to introduce another topic.

"Oh, Mr. Trelawney, I must tell you that I had a visitor yesterday. You will never guess who it was. And he brought me a present too, a present of some most delicious blackberries!"

"I shall not attempt to guess, Miss Trotter; it would be of no use. I see nothing surprising in your having had a visitor; but please relieve my curiosity by naming him."

"Nat Youlton."

"That man."

"Yes, that man. Why do you say it in such a tone? You know how anxious I was to get hold of him? Well, I chanced of him the other day below the cliff where he was at work, and he got some ferns for me and we had a few words together. I was so pleased that he should come yesterday morning bringing me those blackberries. It seemed to show that he was willing——." She paused, struck by the unsympathetic expression on the vicar's face—"Oh, Mr. Trelawney, why do you think so badly of Nat Youlton?"

"I do think badly of him, I must confess, and I have had cause. I know that he broke his mother's heart; I know that he is the worst man——."

"I do not believe that he is the worst man," she broke in impetuously. "Excuse me for differing from you; but I really have good hope of Nat Youlton. I see such an improvement in him."

"Do you?" The vicar's tone was not encouraging.

"I do," she said boldly: "his manner has softened; his appearance has changed; he does not look so hard and reckless."

"Oh" She felt irritated by the way in which the old man uttered this ejaculation. She looked at him inquiringly.

"Perhaps," he said, "you have not heard the last news of Nat Youlton."

"The last news?" she said, not without a sense of dread.

"Ah, you have not. I only heard it as I came along. It seems that there was an ugly row at the 'Sportsman's Arms' last night—that house is a disgrace to the neighbourhood. Nat Youlton was there drinking with a lot of dissolute fellows, and he and another man quarrelled They say that Nat fell on the man fiercely and would have killed him if the landlord had not interfered. As it was the man was taken up insensible, and Nat, in consequence, passed the night at the lock-up at Camelford"

The colour fled from Miss Trotter's face as she listened; her heart grew heavy with a sickening sense of disappointment

"It seems that they quarrelled about a woman—and of all women, that nice little widow, Mrs. Trewarne. Nat, it appears, has been visiting her once or twice of late, and this fellow began chaffing him about it, and that was more than Nat's temper could stand. But surely Mrs. Trewarne would have nothing to say to a fellow like that, for she is a good woman is Mrs Trewarne; I have a high opinion of her. She is very delicate though; she looks as if she were in a consumption. But, my dear Miss Trotter, I have frightened you with my tale of a tavern brawl. Do not look so dismayed, pray."

"I feel so disappointed," said Miss Trotter in a low, sad tone—"so deeply disappointed; for I had really begun to have good hope of Nat Youlton."

"I feel no hope of him," said the vicar, gravely, with a shake of the head; "none whatever. When a man has served the devil for as many years as Nat Youlton has, there is, humanly speaking, very small chance of his rescue."

Miss Trotter was silent for a few moments. Then she turned sharply on the vicar—"Which is stronger in this world, Mr. Trelawney, good or evil?"

"Good, I believe," he replied; but his tone was not confident.

"So I believe," she said. "Good must be stronger than evil, because Christ is stronger than Satan. But how is it that good people so often speak as if it were the reverse—as if victory were secured to evil?"

"I suppose it is because we have so little faith," he replied.

"And for lack of faith our efforts fail, for, 'according to our faith,' it shall be with us," said Miss Trotter. "I must pray and hope still; but it is hard. I feel *so* disappointed!"

The parson looked at her and felt rebuked. He would never have said that any man was beyond the reach of the grace of God, but, practically, he had long since given up Nat Youlton as a hopeless case.

"It is always well to hope," he said, as he rose to go. "We see astonishing changes in people sometimes."

He spoke thus to comfort her; but as he remounted his horse and rode up the village he shook his head more than once at the thought of Nat Youlton, and again decided that the man had fallen too low for there to be any probability of his reformation.

And Nat thought the same. Happily, the man he had felled by his strong hand proved to be only stunned by the fall; so that when Nat was brought before the magistrates he was dismissed with a caution on the payment of a small fine. But Nat was scarcely thankful that he had been saved from the guilt of blood. He had come very near causing the death of a fellow mortal; but he was not conscious of any great relief on finding that the case was not so bad as it had seemed at first.

His heart was too full of despair for there to be room for any other feeling. He slunk homewards, desiring to meet no one. He would not enter Trevena, nor did he go at once to his cottage.

When not far from home he turned aside from the road, climbed a gate, and made his way across some fields to the shore. He came down presently to a tiny bay or creek, lying between the jagged cliffs. The weather had been wet and stormy for the last two days; but now, late in the afternoon, the sun was shining on a glorious sea of clear transparent green, with foam horses cresting the great billows which heaved tumultuously as far as the eye could reach. They crashed against the grey and green cliffs, sending showers of spray into the air; they played like fountains against the huge jutting crags of the bold headlands; they rushed with a swirl and roar into the cavernous hollows of the cliffs, to retreat with wild turmoil a moment later. Here and there tremendous masses of rock, standing forth from the mainland, made a target for the waves, against which they hurled themselves madly.

The mood of the fierce relentless sea seemed to accord with that of Nat Youlton. He stood like one fascinated, watching the onslaught of the waves, and listening to their deep booming fall and the heavy grating sound with which they receded over the rocks. He had a desperate longing to throw himself in, and let the waves buffet him to death. He could swim; but the tide was on the turn, and even a good swimmer would have a poor chance in such a sea. He had but to let himself go, and return would soon be impossible; even if Nature proved too strong for resolution, and urged him to struggle for self-preservation.

Why should he not do it? He had nothing to live for, no one dependent on him, no one to care what became of him. Life had become hateful to him. The pleasures of sin had ceased to charm; he loathed them even whilst they enchained him; and there was nothing better for him. He could not change his ways. He had tried, and it was impossible. No one would even believe that he wanted to live differently. He had brought a fresh stain on his name just now. He could fancy how people had talked about the row; they would tell *her* about it, and she would despise him; she would be ashamed to think that such a man had dared to speak to her of marriage. He could never see her again; she could never own him now as a friend. It was with a choking sensation in his throat that he remembered how she had said—

"God bless my friend, Nat Youlton."

That could never be, though it was kind of her to say it. There could be no blessing for a man such as he was.

But Nat Youlton did not take the fatal plunge he contemplated. Many a man dreams of such a lawless act without committing it; for the love of life is strong in us, and few hearts are utterly without hope for the future. There came to Nat's mind again those lines:—

> "Teach me to live that I may dread
> The grave as little as my bed,
> Teach me to die that so I may
> Rise glorious at the judgment day."

and he knew that he dared not die by his own act.

He lingered on the lonely little beach watching the tide go out till it was almost dark. Then at last he walked away; but even then he did not seek his own home. Almost involuntarily he turned his steps towards Trevena. He entered the village and walked up the street, hoping that no one would observe him in the faint light. He went on till he reached the house in which Mrs. Trewarne lived. Then he paused. Something had drawn him there, he knew not what. He stood by the palings and gazed at the window of the widow's room. A light was burning there, and presently he saw a woman's shadow thrown upon the blind. Then suddenly the house door opened, and some one came out in haste. It was Mrs. Jowett, who shared the house with Mrs. Trewarne. She was an honest hard-working woman, whose husband was at sea. She ran against Nat without seeing him, then uttered an excited cry. He could see that she was greatly agitated.

"What is the matter?" he asked, quickly; "has anything happened?"

"Oh, is it you, Nat Youlton? for goodness' sake call some one to my help, for I believe she is dying."

"Who? not Mrs. Trewarne?"

"Yes, yes, poor soul; she is took bad to be sure." She 's broke a blood-vessel, and I fear she 'll die before the doctor can get here. And who 's to fetch him I don't know."

"I'll fetch him," cried Nat; "I 'll fetch him as quick as any one can. You go back to her; I 'll see to it."

"Ay, do. Brown will lend you a horse." And she hurried back into the cottage.

Nat lost no time in doing what he could. He sent a neighbour to Mrs. Jowett's assistance, got the loan of Brown's horse, and, without waiting to saddle it, mounted its bare-back, and rode at full speed towards Boscastle, for nowhere nearer was a medical man to be found. He had ceased to think of himself as he tore along in the dark at a break-neck pace. "Dying," Mrs. Jowett had said; could it be true that she was dying? Oh, if the doctor should not arrive in time!

She read how Jesus calmed the stormy waves.

A WONDERFUL STORY.

It was a stormy night. The wind was howling and dashing the heavy rain against the window pane; whilst far out at sea the waves were lashing themselves into an angry foam, and tumbling and tossing as though they were mad.

Some miles from land a fishing boat was trying to make for the shore, its crew filled with trouble and anxiety at the danger all around them.

Near the beach, where the roaring sea was grinding the pebbles and breaking like thunder on the sand, a little cottage stood. Its two inmates—mother and child—were speaking of the master of the fishing boat struggling so hard in the waves.

"Don't cry, mother, dear," the little girl said; "father will come back again, won't he?"

"Oh yes, I trust so, my child."

"Then why do you cry, mother?"

The woman only sobbed the louder. But in a little while Fanny went up to her and said, "Mother, dear, read me that wonderful story again that father read last Sunday."

And so, drying her eyes, mother got down her Testament, a prize she had won at Sunday-school years ago, and read how Jesus calmed the stormy waves on the Sea of Galilee.

"And didn't father say that he always took Jesus with him on his boat, mother?"

"Yes, darling."

"Then can't Jesus make the waves obey Him now?"

"Oh yes, Fanny, just as much as ever."

"Then I wouldn't cry, mother; I should ask Him to do it again to-night."

And there, amid the shrieking of the storm, mother and child knelt and prayed, and Jesus gave peace and calm to the mother's troubled heart.

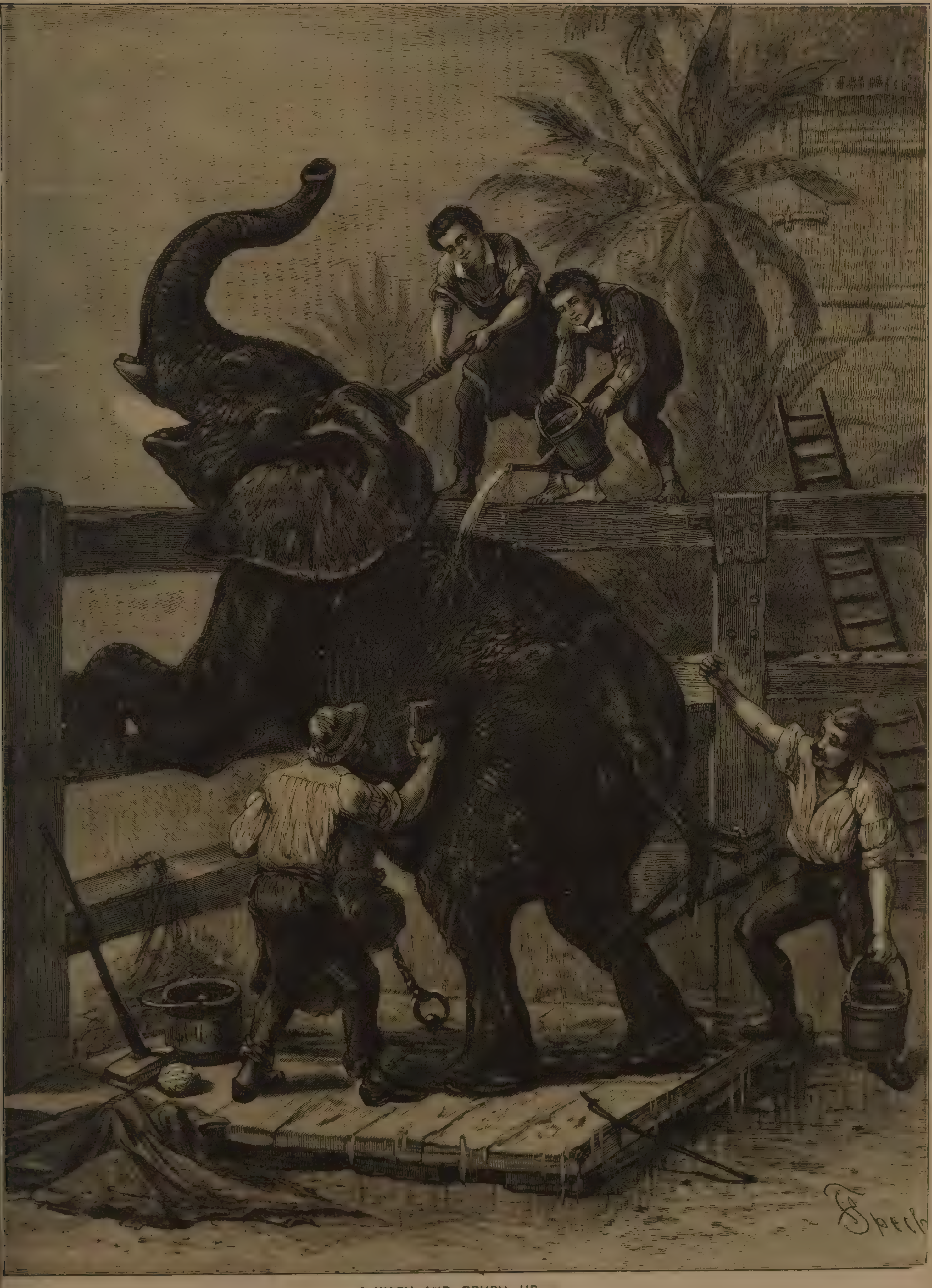
And long after Fanny was safely tucked in her cot, father came back safe and sound, but weary with his long and stormy voyage, and kissed his little girl fondly in her sleep as mother told of her simple faith.

Ah! if we but had Fanny's faith we should know ourselves to be safe amid all the storms of life. It is Jesus who yet says to all our trouble, "Peace, be still."

Mab.

* * *

Hearing of Horses.—It is said to be well known that horses can hear deep sounds which men cannot. For days before the last earthquake in the Riviera, horses there showed every symptom of abject fear, which continued without any change of character till the fury of the convulsions broke forth. But not till a few seconds before the earth began to quake did human beings hear any sounds, while it is extremely probable that the horses heard the subterranean noises for two or three days previously.



A WASH AND BRUSH UP.

THE ELEPHANT'S TOILET.

"The elephant 's a gentleman," sings Tommy Atkins in one of Rudyard Kipling's ballads of soldier-life in India; and, like all real gentlemen, he is very particular about cleanliness, and very fond of cold water—as cold as he can get it in the tropics. Wild elephants may wander away from the jungle, over desert plains, but they will never be far from trees and water; and an elephant track means water near by to a thirsty wanderer.

Not that, perhaps, the water will be in a very attractive condition when the elephant has finished with it. A herd of wild elephants will drink their fill at a pool, then get into it, as far as its depth allows, and use their trunks as natural syringes to squirt the muddy water over themselves and each other till, by the time they have departed, the pool will be as much mud as water.

For if the gentleman elephant does not have his wash, his skin becomes hard and dry and uncomfortable, and he is caked with dust and annoyed by insects. Even a puddle from which he can sprinkle his back is a comfort to him; but when he reaches a deep pool or river he is happy.

He is not such a water-lover as his clumsy cousin, the hippopotamus—the Behemoth of the Book of Job; but he is an excellent swimmer, and makes nothing of getting across a wide river, swimming in the file after the leader of the herd. Now and then he will lie down under water, with only the tip of his trunk out to breathe by, just as a man will sometimes float upright in a swimming bath, with his nose just above the surface.

And when the wild elephant is caught and tamed and made the strongest servant of man, he is still particular to have his wash. Like a familiar figure on English walls, he won't be happy till he gets it.

In some zoological gardens there is a tank or pond where the great beasts may disport themselves. The grave and sober elephant can play as many tricks as a school-boy in a swimming-bath. He will squirt himself, his friends, and perhaps an incautious bystander; he lashes the tank into foam with his trunk, rolls over, swims round, dives and generally enjoys himself.

Where he cannot have his regular bath, he must at least have his "wash and brush up," though it is rather more extensive and laborious than what a man needs before his dinner. The illustration gives a sketch of the business as conducted in a European zoological garden. One man sluices the great beast with a bucket; one scrubs him with a brush: while two boys go over his back from above with a watering-can and a broom.

Some elephant-drivers in India rub over their big charges with a brick—a rough but efficient substitute for the pumice-stone we use for obstinate stains. The elephant in the picture is probably a fidgety animal; for though he is evidently enjoying his scrub, he is tethered by two legs so that he may not move round and perhaps upset those who are washing him.

In India, where the elephant is the outward sign of the greatness of a rajah, his toilet is far more elaborate. On days of festival he is first washed and groomed, then elaborately painted and powdered. His enormous feet are hung round with silver chains; his tusks are sheathed in silver. Great ornaments are hung over his forehead. A gold-fringed housing covers him; a richly-decorated, perhaps a silver howdah, rises from his back, and the rajah, himself a mass of jewels, goes abroad among his subjects to display his majesty.

For even small potentates can hoard up a treasure in ornaments and jewels; and some of the sovereigns of the native states have millions stored away, to which they can add year by year, as they are now safe from a plundering inroad from some greedy neighbour or freebooting chief. To have an elephant is the desire of every petty chief who can afford one; it is his way of setting up his carriage, and a tolerably costly one; for not even a livery-stable keeper could make the cost of feeding a pair of horses equal that of satisfying the needs of the elephant.

Then, when the small rajah blazes abroad on his state elephant, and impresses his subjects with his splendour, what does the elephant think of it all? He is generally a philosopher; there is much wisdom in the wrinkles round his sharp eyes; and though he may enjoy being the observed of all observers, possibly he feels some contempt for the puny short-lived mortals to whose ostentation he contributes.

Possibly he is glad to go back to his stable, to be relieved of his gorgeous trappings, to have the stripes of paint scrubbed off him with a mop, and to settle down placidly—not to sleep, for he sleeps but little—but to enjoy a light meal of a few bushels of rice or grain, and a few bundles of green stuff, with a treat of a basket of raw sugar to help.

A. R. R.

IN A BLACKING FACTORY.

Part II.

The next process is that of sealing. The wax is made on the premises, and is held in a cauldron kept nearly at boiling-point by steam.

I have seen a good many wonderful sights, but have very seldom been more struck than I was by the way in which the sealer did his work.

With one hand he dipped the head of the bottle into the red mass, and, as he took it out, the other hand had seized a fresh bottle; so he kept on, with the swiftness and regularity of a machine.

And what a wonder it was when it was done! It dried instantly, and not one tiny drop could be found which had run over the edge of the cork—not one part where it was thicker than another. We timed him, and he sealed twenty bottles in thirty seconds!

Leaving this man with reluctance, we came upon three boys standing close together—one pasting labels as fast as he could, the others putting them on the bottles.

I was told that when put on their mettle they could label 600 in a quarter of an hour. It would be difficult to find a machine which could outdo that.

The next room we went into was devoted to tin blacking, chiefly used for supplying Government orders.

At the end was a gang of four, spooning out the black stuff from a tub, putting it into the tins, and then tapping them on the edge of the barrel to shake it into its place.

It was wonderful to watch the exactness with which they guessed the quantity each box held, seldom going back for more, never having too much, and yet filling them to such a uniform level that there could not be a fraction of difference in the weight.

As we left the liquid department, I remarked upon the warmth of the place, and learned that the premises are now warmed entirely by the exhaust steam from the engines (four in number), which was at one time looked upon as useless. In those days the heating was done with hot-water pipes, and two tons of coal or more were consumed in one week; but "experience teaches," and the use of waste substances is now a study in itself.

We are now on the paste side of the manufactory.

It is brought in tubs from the brewing-room, and spread on shallow oblong trays, which look very like baking tins. Each tin is passed to a man who stands with two iron bars close at hand, each of which has sharp teeth of about an inch long. These instruments he draws across each tin—one lengthways, the other from side to side.

It takes less time to do than to describe! And the large cake is thus cut up into half a gross of smaller ones ready for packing. The tins are then stacked up, in order that the blacking may dry thoroughly. When dry the tins are passed to a cutter-out, who just raises them from the tin and hands them on to the folder, who wraps them up in the covers commonly called skins, and packs them in grosses on thin iron plates. Boys were engaged piling up these plates of blacking on the double lift, which was close at hand, and which manages to solve the mystery of doing two things at once—by taking down the full plates and bringing up the empties at the same time.

Almost everything that is used in the manufactory is made on the premises. The sealing-wax we have already noticed.

The paper comes in lengths of nearly two miles on reels, which are sent purposely to the mill. There are three colours—blue, white, and yellow.

There is an ordinary printing-machine, in which the paper enters unspotted and comes out bearing the impress of the firm.

Close at hand stands a special machine for printing the labels for the liquid blacking. If you will look at the next bottle of Day & Martin's which you buy, you will see that the label is printed in two colours, and that the lines are particularly fine. This is the speciality of this engine, and by means of it they can easily detect a forgery, though, of course, I was not initiated into the exact manner of doing this.

There are, I believe, only three of these machines in existence.

There was an uncomfortable-looking machine, too, rejoicing in the name of the "guillotine," which cuts out the labels after they have been printed in strips and *needled* by a boy, the said needling consisting in putting them all exactly even, one on top of the other, for which purpose a needle is put through at a particular spot.

So far I had seen nearly everything, but there was one little matter not yet explained to me.

"Where do you get those skins?" I asked, pointing to rolls of translucent skin-like stuff.

I must own that I felt somewhat "small" when I heard that it was only paper after all, taken straight from the printing-press, where I had seen it, and by an instantaneous process rendered waterproof and skin-like in appearance.

I should like to shake hands with the man who invented that process, it might be so useful in everyday life if it were widely known.

But we have reached the ground-floor once more, and stand where we first entered—in the cooperage and packing department.

Here men are making casks; there others are filling them; and here, again, they are being rolled out and placed on the waggon to be taken—who knows where? to blacken the boots of—who knows whom?

The thought is too vast for me, and I hurry out into the noisy street and give a friendly nod to the boy who says—"Clean your boots, sir?" mentally wondering whose blacking he patronises.

E. M. W.

* * *

GO AND TELL JESUS.

'His disciples came, and took up the body, and buried it, and went and told Jesus."—*Matt.* 14. 12.

Go and tell Jesus when Satan assails,
Trusting in Jesus the saint never fails;
He who the foe has defeated before,
Strength to His people imparts evermore.

Go and tell Jesus when troubles affright,
Trusting in Jesus, the darkness is light;
He who the pathway of trial hath trod,
Leads thee through much tribulation to God.

Go and tell Jesus when burdened with care,
Trust thee in Jesus, He heareth thy prayer;
Calleth He now to the spirits oppressed,
"Come unto Me, all ye weary, and rest."

Go and tell Jesus when friends are but few,
Trust thee in Jesus, the Faithful and True;
Fear not but He will His children befriend,
Loving them tenderly unto the end.

Go and tell Jesus when friends are all gone,
Look unto Jesus when mourning alone,
Whisper, to cheer thee, His life-giving name,
Jesus, Immanuel, ever the same.

Go and tell Jesus when ending thy life,
Trust Him to shield thee amidst the last strife,
Trust Him, victorious o'er death and the grave,
Jesus, Immanuel, "mighty to save."

Julius Brigg

The Golden Tower, Seville.

THE STORY OF COLUMBUS.

In 1485 the merchants of Venice despatched their annual fleet, laden with rich goods and spices, to London and Bruges. But the vessels never reached their destination. The commander's despatches said, "Our four Flanders galleys having left Cadiz fell in with Columbus—that is to say, Nicolo Griego—captain of seven armed ships, under the flag of King Charles of France," etc.

This Nicolo Griego, or Nicholas the Greek, was the most dreaded pirate of his day. His assumed name of Columbus (dove) was the terror of merchant vessels. It is not with him that we are concerned, however, but with a relative named Christopher, who accompanied him on this occasion.

Victory, after twenty hours of hard fighting, rested with the pirates, into whose hands fell an immense quantity of treasure. Our hero, however, did not share in it.

His vessel had been lashed to one of the great Venetian galleys, to enable the pirates to board the enemy. The Venetians set Columbus's ship on fire. The flames consumed both vessels. The only resource left to the survivors was to leap into the sea.

Columbus, half dead, was cast upon the shore near Lisbon, to which town he made his way. Some Genoese, his countrymen, received him and helped him in his distress. He abandoned his piratical life, and, as his son tells us, lived honourably.

At church one day he saw a fair maiden, Donna Filippa Moniz, the daughter of Perestrello, the discoverer of the Madeiras. They became acquainted; the lady was charmed with Columbus's fine and stately appearance; and they were married.

They lived with her mother, the widow of Perestrello, who showed Columbus her husband's maps and charts. He studied carefully the Portuguese annals of discovery, and suddenly there came upon him the revelation of the world that lay beyond the dark Atlantic. The Portuguese, he saw, sailed to the south; he would seek the Indies in the west.

Such is the narrative told by his son Ferdinand, and evidently taken from the explorer's own lips. Other stories are, however, told as to the way in which Columbus was first led to think about his great enterprise.

From whichever source he first derived his idea, other occurrences happened which strengthened it. Some mariners, after a long continuance of westerly winds, picked up pieces of wood curiously carved, but evidently not with iron tools, such as were generally used; again, trees of unknown kinds had been wafted to the Azores, and two dead bodies of men, unlike in colour and features to any known race, together with a curiously wrought canoe, were cast on the shore of the island of Flores.

When Columbus had fully formed his opinion, it became the one object of his life to show its correctness. He was not rich enough to fit out an expedition at his own expense, so, after one or two unsuccessful trials elsewhere, he resolved to ask the help of the king of Spain. Seven weary years elapsed, however, before substantial help was forthcoming from this quarter, during which time Columbus earned a scanty living by making maps and charts.

Twice he was on the point of leaving the country, but was recalled, and at last Queen Isabella offered to pledge her jewels to raise the necessary funds, the royal treasury being nearly empty owing to a war.

Preparations for the voyage were now begun in good earnest. Three vessels were procured, but there was some delay in getting together a crew willing to go on such a hazardous enterprise.

On August 2nd, 1492 (just four hundred years ago), Columbus and all his companions, one hundred and twenty in number, marched in solemn procession to the monastery of Rabida to confess their sins, pray for mercy, and implore the blessing of God on their expedition. The next day they set out for the Canaries, where they remained until September 6th, repairing and improving their vessels. That day may therefore be regarded as really the first day of the most memorable voyage that had yet been undertaken.

On the second day the fleet lost sight of land. Many of the crew, hardy sailors as they were, sighed and gave way to tears, believing that they had for ever left country, family, and friends, and should never return. Columbus consoled them and inspired them with new courage.

By October 1st they were, according to the Admiral's reckoning, seven hundred and seventy leagues to the west of the Canary Islands, but his men did not know that they had come so far. They had now been more than three weeks at sea, and their prospect of success seemed to be as distant as ever. The crews were in a state of discontent bordering on rebellion. Some even proposed that if the Admiral refused to return home, he should be thrown into the sea.

The experiences of his early life had, however, accustomed Columbus to dealing with rough men. His firmness won the day, and the voyage was continued.

After several days the discontent broke out again. The officers, who had before supported the Admiral's authority, now sided with the men in saying that he should be compelled to return. It was useless to think of quelling a mutiny so general and so violent. Columbus therefore promised that if land were not sighted in three days he would return.

Columbus did not risk much in confining himself to so short a time. He felt certain that he was near land. For some days the sounding-line had reached the bottom, and the soil which it brought up showed that land could be at no great distance. A branch of a tree with perfectly fresh berries had been picked up, and many other indications of land had been noticed.

From all these signs, Columbus was so confident of being near land, that on October 11th, after public prayers for success, he ordered the sails to be furled and the ships to lie to, lest they should be driven ashore in the night.

About ten o'clock Columbus, standing on the forecastle, observed a light at a distance, and privately pointed it out to Pedro Gultierez, a page of the queen's wardrobe; Gultierez perceived it, and calling to Salcedo, Comptroiler of the Fleet, all three saw it in motion, as if it were carried from place to place.

Columbus.—*From an old Print.*

A little after midnight the joyful cry of "Land! land!" was heard from the *Pinta*, which always kept ahead of the other ships. But having so often been deceived by appearances, every man had now become slow of belief, and all waited with uncertainty and impatience for the coming day.

As soon as morning dawned, October 12th, all doubts and fears were dispelled. From every ship, an island was seen about two leagues to the north, whose flat and verdant fields, well stored with wood and watered by many rivulets, presented the aspect of a delightful country.

The crew of the *Pinta* instantly began the *Te Deum*, as a hymn of thanksgiving to God, and were joined by those of the other ships with tears of joy and congratulation. This office of gratitude to God was followed by an act of justice to their commander. Throwing themselves at his feet, they besought him to forgive their past behaviour, which had so added to his anxieties, and, passing from one extreme to another, they declared the man whom they had lately insulted to be gifted with sagacity and fortitude more than human.

As soon as the sun rose all the boats were manned and armed. They were rowed towards the island with their colours displayed, with warlike music and other martial pomp. Columbus was the first European who set foot in the New World which he had discovered. He landed in a rich dress, with a naked sword in his hand. His men followed, and kneeling down they all kissed the ground they had so long desired to see.

The natives were entirely naked; their long black hair floated upon their shoulders; they had no beards, and every part of their bodies was perfectly smooth.

They were shy at first, but soon became familiar with the new-comers, and with joy received from them bells, glass beads, and other trifles, and in exchange gave such provisions as they had, and cotton yarn. Everything in this first interview between the inhabitants of the Old and New Worlds was conducted with a pleasant and good understanding, to the satisfaction of both sides.

Landing of Columbus.

On the homeward voyage the vessels became separated in a storm. The tempest abated, however, and Columbus was able to reach the Azores, but pushed on as rapidly as possible, being anxious to reach Spain before the *Pinta*, whose captain he suspected of a design to carry home the news first. He reached Palos on the 15th of March; more than seven months from the time of his departure from it.

Great was the excitement as his vessel was recognised. And when the news spread that the New World was discovered, that Columbus had returned with gold and specimens of the productions of the new lands, and, above all, with live natives on board his ship, the joy was indescribable.

The bells were rung, all business was suspended, and the whole population hurried to the shore to receive the Admiral with shouts and acclamations, such as usually attend the visits of royalty. Columbus's first act on landing was to march with his people to church, to return thanks for the success of his voyage. Thus these men began their undertaking with prayer and ended it with thanksgiving—an example to us all.

On the evening of the day of his arrival the missing *Pinta* likewise entered the harbour, she having been driven far to the north by the violence of the storm.

For a time all went well with Columbus. He was loaded with honours and presents from the sovereigns, and his name became famous all over Europe.

But these well-merited favours aroused the envy of some of the courtiers. During the Admiral's absence in the colonies he had left in the newly-found lands, his enemies contrived to poison the minds of the sovereigns against him. After the death of Isabella he fell into absolute want, and at last, worn out by hardships, died at Valladolid, on May the 20th, 1506.

The discoveries of Columbus laid open a knowledge of what are now termed the West India Islands and a small portion of the South American Continent, which this great navigator to the day of his death believed to be a part of Asia or of India.

About ten years after his decease the real character of America and its islands became known to European navigators; and, by an unimportant circumstance, one of these adventurers, Amerigo Vespucci, a Florentine, had the honour of conferring the name "America" upon a division of the globe which ought, in justice, to have been called after the great Columbus.

PRAYER ANSWERED.

Sunday Morning in the Village.

In a small cottage in the outskirts of a great city lived an old man and his wife of the name of Brown. They had at one time been pretty well off, but from various misfortunes had been brought to extreme poverty. So poor indeed were they as sometimes to be without even daily bread.

The old man was completely disabled by rheumatism, and incapable of doing anything, so that upon his wife, herself past sixty, fell the whole burden of their subsistence, which she endeavoured to obtain by doing various little jobs.

This would of course have been insufficient, but for the aid which they constantly received from the neighbours round, who respected them greatly, and though almost as poor, helped them as much as they could.

They had one son, who, though very well off, never came near them, and would do nothing for them. Yet they complained to no one, were always cheerful, and thankful for the least help or kindness; and amidst all their poverty never for a moment doubted their God, but trusted to Him in all things, believing His promise, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."

But by degrees poor old Mrs. Brown found herself getting less and less able to work; times were hard; they got behindhand with their rent, and at last, after many warnings, their landlord threatened, unless it was paid within a week, to turn them into the street.

Where were they to get the money? Four shillings and sixpence was what they wanted, and it seemed utterly impossible to obtain it. Still their faith did not fail them, and every day they besought the Lord to save them from destitution.

At length the last day came; they knelt long together in prayer, imploring that the money might in some way be sent them before night; then the old man rose, and asking his wife to bring him his great coat, said he should go out.

With a sinking heart she was helping him down the door-steps, when a carriage drove past. Its occupant, a lady, looked intently at them, and then, to their astonishment, desired the coachman to stop.

She then kindly inquired what was the matter with the old man, and on being told entered a little into conversation with them, and drew from them a slight idea of their poverty, though without hearing of the particular distress about their rent.

Putting her hand into her pocket, she drew out some silver, and saying it was all she then had about her, gave it to them and drove off.

They knew nothing of her; they had never seen her before, nor did they ever afterwards discover who she was; but on looking at the money they found it to be *four shillings* and *ninepence.*

The above story is perfectly true, and is but a fulfilment of the promise, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, believing, ye shall receive."

There remains only to add, that not long after a weekly allowance was secured to them, and thus, through the Lord's mercy, they were restored to comfort.

"Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass."

"Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord."

THE BRAVE MINER.

MICHAEL VERRAN was a true type of the Cornish miner whose heart is imbued with the spirit of the Gospel of Christ. He commenced his work in the mine at a very early age, passing from one degree of labour to another, until he entered upon his underground duties, and these duties were very irksome.

In the darkness, with no light save that of a tallow candle, he often worked from morning until night, and from night until morning, in dust and sulphur and heat, until his limbs ached with excessive toil.

But Michael was a true Christian. From the lips of his mother he had heard of the Saviour, and sought and found His love. He joined himself with God's people, read his Bible, prayed in secret, and carried the savour of his religion with him into the very heart of the earth.

More now than thirty years ago he and two others were sinking a shaft. They had bored a hole in the bottom of it in the usual way, then one had climbed to the windlass, leaving the other two to attend to the blasting. They half filled the hole with gunpowder, and then tamped it with soft stone to the top. Their working-tools were placed in one corner of the pit, and secured by having a few rough boards thrown over them. They were nearly in readiness to blast, as they had often been before.

Now, the right and proper course would have been to have cut the fuse to its necessary length before placing it in the hole; then one should have ascended in the bucket, the single man left in the pit should have waited until the bucket came down again, fired the touch-paper placed under the fuse, given the signal, and the two men should have drawn him out of danger before the explosion took place. In the present case, however, they had acted carelessly, having left the fuse attached to the coil. Then they cut it with a stone and one of their blunt iron drills. In doing this, fire was struck; the fuse was ignited, hissing sparks fell around them, the powder in the hole might explode at any moment; they both dashed to the bucket and shouted the signal.

But the man at the windlass, though strong and hale, could not draw up the two. He tried, and tried in vain: one could escape, both could not, and delay was death to both. Oh, what a solemn moment in the history of their lives!

It is the general custom of the Cornish miner who attends especially to the charging of the hole to remain behind and fire it. It was Michael's turn to have ascended; but, looking for a moment at his comrade, and stepping from the bucket, he cheerfully exclaimed, "Escape for thy life! I shall be in heaven in a minute!"

The bucket sped swiftly up the shaft until it reached the platform, and the man was safe. Oh, how eager he was to learn the fate of his deliverer, who had so nobly given up his own life to save him! He bent over the pit, gazed into the great gloom, and listened.

Then came the hollow rumbling roar of the explosion, hurling a fragment of the rock to the very foot of the windlass, which left a deep and abiding scar upon his brow. The smoke poured from the mouth of the pit like a furnace; they listened with beating hearts and throbbing temples, but not a sound was now heard in the workings below.

Down they went through the sickening sulphur, down, down, until they stood upon the rended earth in the bottom of the pit. Rocks lay here and rocks lay there in wild confusion, but the Christian hero they saw not.

With faltering lips they called him by his name: "Michael! Michael Verran! where art thou?"

And a voice came up from among the flints, sweeter than the voice of morning in the dewy vales: "Thank God! I am here."

Yes, thank God, he was there, and his pulses were beating yet, and his faith in Christ was unshaken. With eager hands they removed the rubbish, rock after rock, and stone after stone, until they found him under the flints, with one sharp pillar hurled by the blast on his right side, and one sharp pillar on his left, both standing upright, with a rocky cover over them.

Brave, good man! With shouts to the King of heaven, they took him out; and there was not found a rent upon his garment or a scratch upon his flesh. He told them that when he was left alone by the hissing fuse he sat down in a corner of the shaft, held a slab of rock before his eyes, commended his soul to his Maker, and waited the issue. And the God in whom he trusted delivered His faithful servant.

Michael Verran's mining life was changed from that hour. Kind and good people of the Society of Friends rose up to encourage him. They placed him on a small farm, where he passed the remainder of his years in comparative plenty. He served his God in secret as well as in the great congregation; and when the time came for his departure he was, as he felt in the bottom of the shaft at South Caradon, quite ready.

He now sleeps in a quiet country graveyard, where the daisies blossom in the grass, and the birds sing at the opening of summer; but far away over mountain and valley, and stream and sea, his Christian heroism is known, and many an ancient man and buoyant stripling wipes away a tear when listening to the recital of his manly deed, and exclaims with a throbbing heart, "Michael Verran was a true hero!"

* * *

A STORY—FOR ALL TIME.

"I WISH you would take this package to the village for me, Jim, my lad," he said, hesitatingly.

Now, I was a boy of twelve, not fond of work, and was just out of the hayfield where I had been since early morning. I was tired, dusty, and hungry. It was two miles to town. I wanted to get my supper and wash and dress for the singing-school.

My first impulse was to grumble, for I was vexed that he should ask after my long day's work. But if I refused he would go himself. He was a gentle, patient old man. And something stopped me—one of God's angels, I think.

"Of course, father, I'll take it," I said, heartily.

He gave me the package. "Thank you, Jim; I was going myself, but somehow I don't feel very strong to-day." He walked with me to the road that turned off to the town. As he left he put his hand on my arm, saying again, "Thank you, my son, you've always been a good boy to me, Jim."

I hurried to town and back. When I came near the house I saw a crowd of farm hands at the door. One of them came to me, with signs of tears on his face.

"Your father," he said, "fell dead just as he reached the house. The last words he spoke were of you."

I am an old man now, but have thanked God over and over, in all the years since, that those last words to me were, "You've always been a good boy to me."

No human being ever was sorry for love or kindness shown to others. But there is bitter remorse in remembered neglect or coldness to loved ones who are dead. Do not begrudge kind deeds and words, especially to those about the same hearth. It is such a little way we can go together. He is richest of all who is most generous in giving the love that blossoms continually in kind words and deeds.

FOR HIS SAKE.

"How can we love those who don't love us—much less our enemies?" mused Mollie, as she carefully watered her window plants, thinking meanwhile of the Sunday-school lesson, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." "I don't see how it can be done. No one uses me despitefully, but if any one did, I am sure I shouldn't even try to love him."

"How thrifty your plants are, Mollie," said some one who had heard Mollie's quiet soliloquy.

"Yes, don't they grow famously?"

"You must be very fond of plants."

"No, I don't think I am naturally. I used to consider it a trouble to water them every day."

"What made you do it, then?"

"Oh, auntie! you know they were sister Annie's. She loved them, and when she died I took care of them for her sake; but now, somehow, I have grown fond of them too, they seem so grateful, and it is such a delight to discover new buds and leaves day after day. See how full of lovely blossoms this cactus is."

"Is that the cactus that poisoned you last spring, when your hands were so swollen?"

"Yes, it is the same cactus, but it was not the fault of the plant. You see, I didn't know how to manage it; I don't get thorns in my hands now, unless I am careless. And really, auntie, I think I am more fond of it than of the other plants, it blooms so magnificently."

"Is it possible to love those who despitefully use you?"

"Why, auntie!" exclaimed Mollie, facing about, a twinkling light in her eyes.

"Yes, Mollie, that is the way. You took care of them for dear Annie's sake, and so grew to loving them for their own sake, even the one that despitefully used you. For *His* sake, Mollie, always for *His* sake, and the rest will follow."

A HOME FOR THE HOMELESS.

You have a home for your body, but no home for your soul! Have you ever seen a poor girl at midnight sitting down on a door-step crying? Somebody passes by and says, "Why do you sit here?" "I have no home."

"Have you no friends?" "No friends at all, sir."

Would you not pity her? It is sad to have a homeless body; but to think of a homeless soul! Where will you hide your guilty head when the tempests of the last judgment day shall sweep on you with fury? Where will you shelter yourself when the blast of the terrible one shall be as a storm against a wall, when the darkness of eternity comes upon you? It will be all in vain for you to cry, "Rocks, hide me; mountains, fall upon me." But the mountains cannot hide you.

Poor homeless soul, do you *want* a home? There is a home for every sinner who feels his misery. Do you ask me what is the price of it? I will tell you: it is something less than proud human nature will like to give. The home is to be had without money and without price. Ah! you would like to pay some price for it. You would love to do something to win Christ. You cannot have the home then.

Will you take Jesus, and dwell with Him throughout eternity? Or will you be content to be a homeless soul? Will you have the home, or will you not? Perhaps you will say, "I should like to have it; but may I have it?" Yes, you may. Come to Jesus. "I am too shabby for such a place." Never mind; there are garments inside.

If you feel guilty and condemned, come, and though the home is too good for you, you are welcome to it just as you are. Christ will cleanse you by His blood, He will sanctify you by His Spirit, and you will then be able to sing with Moses, "Lord, Thou hast been *my* dwelling place in all generations."

TINKER, TAILOR, AND THE REST OF THEM, OR MRS. WATSON'S SEVEN LODGERS.

No. IV.—Sailor.

"*Weepin' may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the mornin'.*"

That 's the words as come into my head, when I think of my fourth set of lodgers.

The rooms hadn't been empty, not ten days, when a widder with three chil'en called one mornin', to ask about 'em. She—poor soul—had the saddest face I ever see. Not sullen, nor discontented, but full of sorrow, as though the light of her life was gone out, and half her heart had gone with it. She told me her husband had been a sailor in the navy, but that a year ago his ship, the *Sappho*, was wrecked, and his name—John Grey—was in the list of lost. Since his death she 'd made a livin' for herself and her chil'en by takin' in plain sewing for the gentry, and a little simple dress-makin' for poor folk, and so she 'd managed to get along somehow. But she 'd paid more 'n she could afford for the cottage she 'd lived in, and hearin' there was two rooms to let in our place, she called to see if she couldn't manage somehow with them. The rooms pleased her, and she was the sort of person as pleased me and my Jacob, so we soon come to terms, and Mrs. Grey and her chil'en moved in as soon as the week's warnin' to their landlady was over.

Well, 'twasn't long afore I found out how hard it was for that poor thing to get along, though she hadn't a lazy bone in her whole body. She got up at five every mornin', and most of the washin' and ironin' was done before breakfast, so as to leave time for needlework. And yet, with all there was to do, them chil'en always went neat and tidy to school, and I never see a hole in the stockin' of one of 'em, nor yet a hook or button gone from their little dresses.

Never did Mrs. Grey buy a penn'orth of anythink as was needless, but she didn't stint the little ones in food, though she always got the cheapest that was wholesome and nourishin', bein' mostly porridge and milk for breakfast and supper, with maybe a slice of bread and treacle; while for dinner they had pea-soup and rice puddin', or suet dumplins', or broth made of bones and thickened with vegetables and barley, or now and again an egg each, when eggs was cheap. It was a good wholesome diet, and the little ones throve on it, and I didn't hear no complaints. It wasn't hard work, nor yet goin' without many things as made Mrs. Grey's face so sad. She had loved her husband as few men is loved, and she sorrowed for him as much now as ever, although a whole year had gone by since she heard of his loss. Not that she murmured. She didn't question the dear Lord's wisdom and love in what He done; indeed, once when I said to her, "My dear, it is hard for you, left like this, with three fatherless children," she just turns her sweet, sad, patient face to me, and says she, with only a little tremble in her voice, "*The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.*"

The winter passed somehow, and in the spring came a letter from a sister of John Grey's as lived at Portsmouth. She had a fruiterer's and florist's business there, and she offered to take Mrs. Grey's eldest gal, Nellie—a bright lass of ten—to feed and clothe her, and send her to school, and in off hours make her useful in the shop or runnin' errands, or sellin' flowers about the town. Well, Mrs. Grey and me talked the matter over, and at last she made up her mind to let Nellie go.

"My sister-in-law 's a kind, God-fearin' woman," says she, "and she 'll take care of the child. It don't seem right to miss a good chance of Nellie bein' provided for."

"How much for this, my dear?"

So, one lovely day, Mrs. Grey saw the little gal off by the train, the guard promisin' to look after her, bein' as how she were very young to travel alone. We all missed the dear little soul, who 'd been like her mother for unselfishness and thought for others; but Mrs. Grey had nice letters from her sister-in-law, Mrs. Grant, sayin' that Nellie was well and happy, gettin' on wonderful at school, and makin' herself very useful at home beside; so the widder was thankful.

The spring went by, and now it was full summer. Even near us the little cottage gardens was full of the sweet, homely, old-fashioned flowers that every one loves; and the letters as come from Portsmouth said that the pinks and roses was more plentiful than they 'd been for years, in the country round, and that now Nellie Grey's holidays had begun, the child was out most of the day with her basket, sellin' bunches of flowers in the town, and on the wharf, and by the harbour, where the seafarin' folk, returnin' from long voyages, was more 'n pleased to buy 'em.

But while all looked bright and cheery down down by the sea, trouble was on its way to us. One evenin' Mrs. Grey she come to my kitchen, where I was cookin' supper for Jacob, and says she, "Mrs. Watson, I 'm afeared I 'm goin' to be ill; for," says she, "all day long I 've been shiverin', and my head 's bad, and my back aches, and I can't keep up no longer. I 've just managed to put the little ones to bed, and now I 'm agoin' to bed myself. I ain't afeared of bein' ill, nor even of dyin', if it was to end so; indeed I 'd be glad to die, and go to my John, and to the dear Lord as loved him. But, Mrs. Watson," says she, "my heart 's heavy for my chil'en. What would become of 'em if they 'd no mother as well as no father? Oh dear!" she sobs out all of a sudden, "my faith 's terrible weak. I don't trust God as I oughter. I fear I ain't no true Christian after all, or I shouldn't feel so despondin' like."

I puts my fingers on her wrist. The pulse was ticking and throbbing like a clock, and in a worse hurry than any clock I ever had.

"My dear," says I, throwin' an arm round her, and supportin' of her out of the kitchen, and down stairs to her room. "My dear, don't you s'pose the good Lord, the Great Physician, knows the difference between faithlessness and fever? You've caught a bad chill, and how can you expect to see the bright side of things, with cold water runnin' down your back, and a sledge hammer in your head? Now don't reproach yourself no more. '*The Lord knoweth them that are His*,' a deal better than they knows theirselves, and He don't make no point of it, that their faith should always be *workin' at high pressure*, as my Jacob says. Nor don't you worry yourself, my dear, about the futur' of them chil'en. God'll take care of 'em. Haven't He said, '*I am the Father of the fatherless, and the God of the widder?*' And now, my dear," says I, as I tucks her up warm in bed, with a cold wet towel round her head, "My dear, no one ever yet trusted the heavenly Father, and was put to shame; and depend on it, things will brighten, in some way that we p'raps don't expect. But any way, Mrs. Grey, try to lie still, and leave everythink in His hands that can take care of all you trust to Him."

"I will! I will!" says she. Then as I was movin' away to the door, I see her lips move, and heard her whisper, "*O Lord, undertake for me!*"

Well, for the next week or so I'd my hands full. Mrs. Grey had a sharp brush of fever, and I had to nurse her and look after the little ones, and do my own work too; but one evenin', when she were over the wust, and only feelin' weak, as was but nat'ral, there come a knock at our street door, and when I run to open it who should be standin' there but little Nellie Grey, holdin' by the hand a good-lookin' sailor feller. I was that took aback I couldn't say nothin'; maybe the man see this, for, says he, smilin', "Nell here tells me you're Mrs. Watson, and such a kind friend to my wife and chil'en."

"Your wife!" cries I, gaspin'; "there ain't no wife lodgin' here but Mrs. Grey, and she's a widder goin' on for two years."

Then afore the sailor could answer, little Nellie she broke in with—

"Dear Mrs. Watson, mother ain't a widder no more. This is father, as wasn't drowned after all. Where's mother? Father he do so want to see her."

"Mrs. Grey's been very ill," says I; "but you and your father will be the best physic she can have. Come this way, please; but wait outside the bedroom door till I've prepared her a bit, for she's too weak to bear a sudden shock."

Well, the two waited, and I goes in, and says I, "My dear, I've somethink to tell you. God's been very good to you; better nor you've dared to think or hope."

And at that Mrs. Grey opens her big soft eyes very wide, and her breath began to come quick.

"My dear," says I again, "weepin' may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the mornin'."

"What is it, Mrs. Watson?" she cried, raisin' herself on her elbow. "What good news can ever come to me now?"

"Dear heart," says I, passin' my arm round her; "dear heart, the best news you can think of. Mrs. Grey, you patient soul, you won't have to wait till the great day for the sea to give up your dead."

And as I says them words, the dear face that she'd loved and lost—as she thought for ever in this world—looked in at the door. I see her stretch out both arms; I hear her cry, "John! my John!" and then I goes out and shuts the door, for there's joys as well as sorrows as is too sacred to be meddled with by outsiders. Later on, I heard the whole story, When the *Sappho* was wrecked off a wild part of the coast of Africa, the sailors got away in boats, and most of 'em landed safe. But one of the boats was swamped in the surf, and all the men in her was drownded savin' John Grey.

Now, John Grey was a fine swimmer, and gettin' hold of some of the wreckage as was floatin' round, he managed to lash hisself to this, and hoped he'd be washed ashore on the beach. But the tide turnin', and he bein' too weak to make way agen it, he was carried out to sea. There he drifted about well-nigh dead—half from hunger, and half from a fearful knock on the head as he got from bein' dashed up agen some of the things as had come off the ship.

At last he was picked up by the crew of a passin' steamer, as was bound for a port a long way off, which the name I can't call to mind.

Poor John Grey was very bad all the voyage, and when they got to the place, he was took straight to the hospital, where he lay ill of brain fever for a many weeks, and nearly died. And when at last he got better, he was weak as a baby, and couldn't remember nothin', not even his own name. But as he growed stronger, things came back to him little by little, and after many months his head got quite clear, and he called to mind all that had happened. He managed to work his passage round the coast to Alexandria, and there the English Consul gave him money and clothes, and went with him aboard of H.M.S. *Raleigh*, as was just sailing for Portsmouth.

The ship got on all right, and the fust person John Grey set eyes on, after getting ashore, was a little gal selling posies of white pinks.

"How like my little lass Nell!" says he to hisself. Then he takes a bunch out of her hand, and, says he, "How much for this, my dear?"

"That bunch is twopence, sir."

"I'll give you sixpence, child," says John Grey, looking hard at the little one, "if you'll tell me your name."

"Please sir, I'm Nellie Grey," says the little gal, "and I live along of my aunt, Mrs. Grant." And the next moment, little Nellie was hugged up close in her father's arms. She didn't know him—not at first—because his whiskers had grown so much since he left home, a year and a-half ago.

Well, in course, John Grey, after seein' his sister, set off by train to come home, Nellie bein' his guide to the new quarters, where he'd never been afore. How he got to us, and his meeting with Mrs. Grey, has been told already, and now my story comes to an end; and it seems to me as how I can't wind it up better in simple and homely fashion, that'll suit my friends the cottagers, than by repeatin' once more them sweet words from Holy Scriptur' as is the text of this little story-sermon. Remember, you that are God's chil'en, and called to pass through trouble, and sorrow, and sickness, and loss, "*Weepin' may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the mornin'.*" And if the joy don't come to us in the mornin' of *this* life—why, we know we're sure of it, anyway, in the better life that's beyond. And may the good Lord bring us all there in His own good time, for Jesus' sake, Amen. And do you say Amen too, and live as if you meant it?

NAT THE QUARRYMAN.

By Eglanton Thorne,

Author of "The Old Worcester Jug," "Nathan Quilter's Fall," etc.

Chapter VIII.—A Friend's Last Words.

It seemed to the women who anxiously watched the sufferer as though the doctor would never come; but Nat Youlton certainly wasted no time in seeking him, nor he in setting out after he had received the summons. He came in time to arrest the rapidly ebbing strength; but he thought so seriously of his patient's condition that he remained with her for several hours; and it was past midnight when he came out of the cottage. To his surprise a man stood by the door, leaning against the wall in an attitude which seemed to suggest that he had been waiting there for some time. He looked more closely, and perceived that it was the man who had ridden to Boscastle to call him.

"What, you here still, my friend!" he began; but Nat cut his words short.

"How is she?" he asked hoarsely.

"Oh, better. She is sleeping quietly now, and her pulse is fuller."

"Then she will recover?"

"Well, I don't know about that," said the doctor cautiously. He looked keenly at Nat. They were advancing together towards Brown's stables, where the doctor's horse and trap had been put up.

"Are you a relation of hers?"

"No," answered Nat.

"Then I need not blink the truth. The poor young woman cannot really recover. There is deep-seated disease of the lungs. I may be able to patch her up for a while, but I fear her life must be reckoned by weeks or months rather than years."

Nat made no reply.

"They tell me she is a widow and has had a hard struggle," continued the doctor, smothering a yawn. "That was a fine little girl I saw sleeping by her mother. Poor little mortal! She will soon be an orphan, I fear."

Still Nat kept silence. Apparently he was quite unmoved by what he had heard. Without an unnecessary word he helped the doctor to harness his horse to the vehicle. The doctor bade him good-night, and drove away. Nat went back to his watch by the cottage. He had determined that he would remain there all night in case he should be wanted.

And he held to his resolution. The gray dawn found him still there, stiff and chilled from his long watch. All was quiet within the cottage. Apparently, the patient was still doing well. As the light grew in the sky, Nat started off for a brisk walk to quicken his stagnant circulation. He felt as if he had lived days instead of but one short night since he quitted the police-station at Camelford. He wandered over the downs for a while, finally descending to the sands, where he took a dip in the sea, which made him feel quite brisk again. He returned home after that; but the sight of his dreary ill-kept cottage brought back his desperate feelings, and, after hastily swallowing a comfortless breakfast, he went back to the widow's cottage.

Mrs. Jowett came out to speak to him.

"She's slept like a lamb all night," she said, "and I do believe she will mend now, though she's so weak she can scarcely raise her hand."

"Is there nought I can do for her?" asked Nat, eagerly.

"Why, to be sure, you're very accommodatin'; there's things to be fetched from Camelford; but you won't like to be going there again, maybe."

Nat's face darkened at this reminder of his recent detention at Camelford.

He answered angrily with an oath that he would as soon go there as anywhere; he cared nothing for what folks might say of him.

So Mrs. Jowett told him what things were wanted, and Nat was soon on the tramp to Camelford. He was back again with his purchases in what seemed to her an incredibly short time. She thanked him heartily for the trouble he had taken; but Nat seemed impatient of her thanks. A little later the doctor arrived, and Nat lingering about was soon relieved to learn that he was satisfied with the condition in which he found his patient, and hoped she would do well.

But now little Mary was causing trouble. She resented being carried from her mother's room, and tried at every opportunity to make her way back to it, screaming lustily when she was thwarted. Mrs. Jowett was afraid that the sick woman would be disturbed by her child's crying, and was at her wits' ends to know what to do with the wilful little maid, who refused to play with the neighbours' children, or to do anything that was suggested to her.

"Give her to me," said Nat, coming to the rescue; "give her to me, I'll take care of her." Mrs. Jowett looked at him in amazement.

"You!" she returned, bluntly; "what could you do with a child? Why, she'd scream at the very sight of you."

"Would she?" responded Nat; "you just try her. Come here, little Mary, and don't make that noise, there's a good maid."

At the sound of his deep, though subdued tones, the little girl ceased to cry, and came trotting to the door. To Mrs. Jowett's astonishment, she uttered a cry of joy on seeing Nat; and the next moment she was in his arms and smiling amidst her tears as she stroked his big beard, and called him "dood Nat."

"Well, I never!" ejaculated Mrs. Jowett; "I had no idea you was such a one for children."

"Mary and me are old friends," said Nat, tossing the child in his arms. "Now, little maid, will you come with me to the sands, and let us see if we can find some shells?"

"Moder tum too," said little Mary, stretching back towards the house.

"Mother can't come to-day, she is too tired; poor mother must rest," he replied to her. "We will go and see what fine things we can find, and then bring them home to mother."

And the child was content. Mrs. Jowett brought her bonnet and cape, and tied them on. "But how about your work, Nat Youlton?"

Nat replied to the effect that the quarries might sink to the bottom of the sea for aught he cared. He bore away little Mary, who now seemed quite happy. Mrs. Jowett stood looking after them, still in a state of great astonishment.

"Well, I never!" she murmured to herself; "and that's Nat Youlton. Wonders never cease!"

One evening when Nat called at the cottage, about a fortnight after Mrs. Trewarne had been taken ill, Mrs. Jowett told him that the invalid was feeling much stronger and would like to speak to him. This was more than Nat had dared to hope for. He was strangely agitated as he entered the sick room; his breath came quickly; his strong limbs trembled, and, for a few moments, he hardly dared to turn his eyes upon the bed. But there was nothing in the sick woman's appearance to alarm him. At the first glance she looked better than he had expected to see her.

A lovely colour glowed in her cheeks as she reclined, propped by pillows, in almost a sitting position; her eyes were bright, but the voice in which she greeted Nat was very faint and hollow.

"How are you, Nat?" she said; "I wanted to see you. I want to thank you for all you've done for me."

"You've no cause to thank me," returned Nat, almost roughly.

"But, indeed, I have," she said with a smile. "Mrs. Jowett has told me how many kind services you have done for me, and how good you have been to little Mary. I do thank you for that. It made my heart ache so to hear her crying when I could do nothing for her."

"Ay, poor little maid, she missed you sore," he responded; "but you'll soon be better now, won't you? I'm real glad to see you with such a colour in your cheeks. You'll be getting about again before long, I hope."

"I do not think so," she said gently; "nay, I feel sure there will be no more getting about for me. I'm on my death-bed, Nat, and I'd be thankful to think I was going to join my husband in the blessed country above, if it were not for little Mary. I can't bear to think of leaving her."

"Now, don't you go to say that," he cried hastily; "you'll get well, yet;" I don't care what the doctor says. If he's not clever enough to cure you, there's other doctors. You must not talk like that, indeed."

"But it is true," she replied; "the doctor is clever enough; but if it is the will of God that I should go, no doctors can keep me. And I know that I am dying. I can feel it here"—she touched her chest—"I can feel that my lungs is wore out. The doctor says he has patched me up, but I know the patching cannot last long."

As Nat listened to her there came home to him the conviction that she was indeed uttering the truth. When she paused he could say nothing. A fresh wave of cold despair swept over him. How far apart they were! She was going to heaven—she was fit for that holy place—she belonged there—and he——! There was only the outer darkness for him.

"I feel so anxious about Mary," the faint voice went on. "It is wrong of me; I ought to be able to trust the Lord; but I do feel uneasy about the child's future. I suppose they will send her to the workhouse. I can't ask Mrs. Jowett to take her. She's none too well off, and, besides, she's not one that understands children."

"I'll take her," cried Nat eagerly; "little Mary shall not go to the workhouse if I know it. She shall have a home with me."

"With you? Oh Nat Youlton!"

"Why not?" he urged; "can you not trust her to me? I swear she should want for nothing; I'd care for her as if she was my own. Don't you believe me?"

"Yes, yes," she said faintly, "I know you would mean to be good to her; I believe you would soon love her as if she belonged to you."

"I do love her," he broke in; "and if I did not love her for her own sake, bless her! I should love her for her mother's."

"You are very kind," she said, and the colour deepened in her wasted cheeks; "but, Nat—"

"I know what you mean," he said, quickly; "you're thinking of what happened the other day, and you can't trust me. But, look here, now, I'll promise you that if I take the child to my home, I'll never touch another drop of drink. I'll swear it if you like, there now!"

"Oh, I don't want you to swear, Nat; I believe your word; and it would be a great thing if you would give up the drink; but, Nat, I should want you to promise more than that before I could give little Mary into your keeping."

"What is it?" he asked eagerly; "I'll promise anything to please you."

"Promise me that you will become a new man in Christ Jesus."

Nat's face fell. He had not expected such a request. "I don't see how I can promise that."

"You can promise to accept the salvation which Jesus has brought us."

He shook his head. "There's no salvation for me; I've gone too far wrong. I can't change myself now."

"No, you cannot change yourself; you are right there," she said; "but God, by His Holy Spirit, will change your heart, if you ask Him."

But again he shook his head despondently.

"It is too late now," he said; "you don't know what a sinner I've been."

"But Jesus receives sinners," she said. "It was to save sinners that He came into the world. Have you a Bible, Nat?"

"Yes, I've got one," said Nat, thinking of the old Bible which had been his mother's, but which he never opened.

"Well, if you read what it tells about the Lord Jesus, you'll see that He never refused to save any one because he was too great a sinner. Even the thief on the cross was saved. It is not our sins, but the love of sin that separates us from God. When we are willing to forsake our sins, He meets us with the peace of forgiveness. Are you willing to give up your sins, Nat Youlton?"

For a few moments Nat made no reply. His mind was in the past, recalling the course of his life during the dark, wicked years that were gone.

"God knows I'm sick of my life," he said at last; "that I'd undo the past if I could; but there's no good thinking of that."

"There is good," she said, with quick panting utterance; "it's true the past cannot be undone; but God can take away its burden of unforgiven sin. Oh, Nat, won't you ask Him to do so?"

"I can't," he said, hoarsely; "I don't know how to pray."

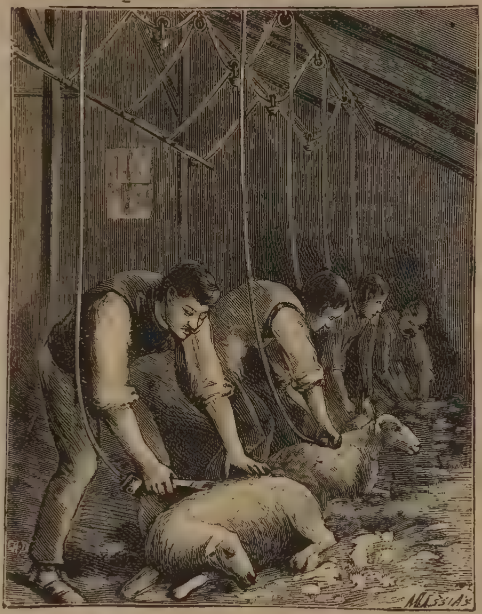
"Then kneel down now and let us pray together," she said, with feverish eagerness.

He knelt, and the dying woman in faint breathless accents prayed:—"O Lord, look upon Nat Youlton, and grant him Thy forgiveness, and save him from his sins for Jesus' sake. Oh, make him a new man in Christ Jesus. Amen."

Nat rose from his knees, and stood looking at her for some moments without speaking. She was faint from the effort she had made, and her face was almost colourless; but there was a look on it Nat never forgot. She gave him her hand, but could not utter a word; then Mrs. Jowett came in, and Nat went quietly out. He never saw his friend in life again.

Though he had given no promise he went away with the feeling that he was pledged to a new life. And in truth for him the new life had already begun.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]



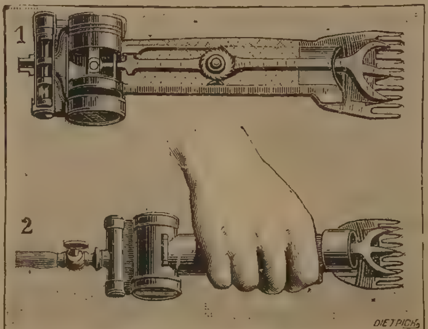
SHEARING SHEEP BY MACHINERY.

The shearing of sheep is an important part of one of the greatest industries in Australia, so it is not wonderful that as the work grows heavier, various expedients have been resorted to, and experiments tried, so as to lighten labour, save time, and lessen expense.

Thus numerous machines have been invented, worked by varied appliances of straps, cords, or other gearing.

But the machine we have before us now for consideration is one in which all these processes hitherto tried are united and perfected, and the motive power of its working is simply compressed air.

We do not propose to give here a scientific explanation of the way in which the air is compressed and forced, by careful regulation, to do its work, we will content ourselves with a brief and simple description of the shearer itself, a specimen of which was on view at Doncaster during the last show organised by the Royal Agricultural Society, the machine being the invention of Mr. Michael Ford, and exhibited by the Australian Shearer Company of Sydney. Of the actual working of this interesting and ingenious contrivance we have a good illustration in the engraving before us.



1. Interior View of Mechanism. 2 Exterior.

The shearer consists of a motor of compressed air, which, by means of a valve regulating the distribution, keeps up a regular alternate movement. The double piston acts upon a lever, the other extremity of which carries a three-toothed knife. The knife is thus worked by a rapid to-and-fro motion, not unlike (only on a larger scale) those used in the hair-dressers' saloons in Paris.

Owing to the employment of compressed air as the motive power, the shearer is able to do the work very quickly and effectually. Indeed, a man has only to guide the knife over the body of the sheep, and the wool is shorn away quite easily, and without the danger to the animal that the old-fashioned process of shearing with scissor-shears too often brings.

Another great advantage of this process is the better quality of the wool obtained, on account of its regular length and smoothness. Whereas, under the old system, the struggles of the frightened beasts frequently made the shearing so difficult that the wool was ragged and torn, and much of it was wasted.

It is said, too, that when once the sheep has been shorn by the new shearer the wool ever after grows better and to more equal lengths all over its body, becoming, of course, valuable in proportion.

* * *

CHIPPINGS.

Maxims.—Persevere against discouragements.

Keep your temper.

Employ leisure in study, and always have some work in hand.

Be punctual and methodical in business, and never procrastinate.

Never be in a hurry.

Preserve self-possession, and do not be talked out of a conviction.

Rise early, and be an economist of time.

Maintain dignity without the appearance of pride.

Manner is something with everybody, and everything with some.

Be guarded in discourse: attentive, and slow to speak.

Never acquiesce in immoral or pernicious opinions.

Think nothing in conduct unimportant or indifferent.

Be not forward to assign reasons to those who have no right to ask.

Rather set than follow examples.

Practise strict temperance, and in all your transactions remember the final account.

"Walk circumspectly, redeeming the time." *Bishop Middleton.*

Lofty Trees.—Some idea of the loftiness attained by trees of the genus Eucalyptus may be formed when it is stated that some of the specimens of the *Eucalyptus amygdalina*, measured by Baron von Müller, the Government Botanist of Victoria, would overtop the cross on St. Paul's Cathedral.

Profitable Fowl Keeping.—A correspondent of the *Cambrian* writes: "A popular delusion, or rather prejudice, existing amongst farmers and others, that fowls are unprofitable things, induces me to give you the result of my experience on this point during the past month of December. From twelve pullets, hatched in March and April last, I have obtained during the thirty-one days of that month 285 eggs; the value of which, at the then current country prices, amounted to £2 7s. 6d. The cost of feeding these birds during this time has been 5s. 7½d., with the assistance of a grass run alone; no cornstack near or other means of obtaining extra food. From past experience I have no doubt these fowls will continue to produce eggs at nearly the same rate during the next nine or ten months, after which they will be fattened and disposed of to make room for this year's succession of chickens, then commencing to lay. By such rational treatment, accompanied by warm housing and liberal feeding, my fowls return me a clear profit of certainly not less than 500 per cent.

Remedy for Frosted Potatoes.—Those of our readers whose potatoes have been injured by the frost will be glad to know of a simple means by which the potatoes may be restored. It is said that if the potatoes are placed in water for a few days the frost will be completely removed, and if then dried gradually they will be as good as before, either for eating or planting.

Dutch Thrift.—King George I., on a journey to Hanover, stopped at a village in Holland, and while the horses were getting ready he asked for two or three eggs, which were brought him, and charged two hundred florins. "How is this?" said his Majesty, "eggs must be very scarce in this place." "Pardon me," said the host, "eggs are plentiful enough, but Kings are scarce." The King smiled, and ordered the money to be paid.

A Good Sail.—Old Captain Yara was a perfect marine philosopher, and no amount of ill-luck ever depressed his faith or good spirits. Coming into the harbour once with an empty ship, after a three years' cruise, he was boarded by a townsman, who inquired, "Wal, cap'n, how many bar'ls? Had a good v'yage?" "No," responded the skipper, "I haint got a bar'l of ile aboard; but," said he, rubbing his horny palms with satisfaction, while his hard features relaxed into a smile, "I've had a mighty good sail."

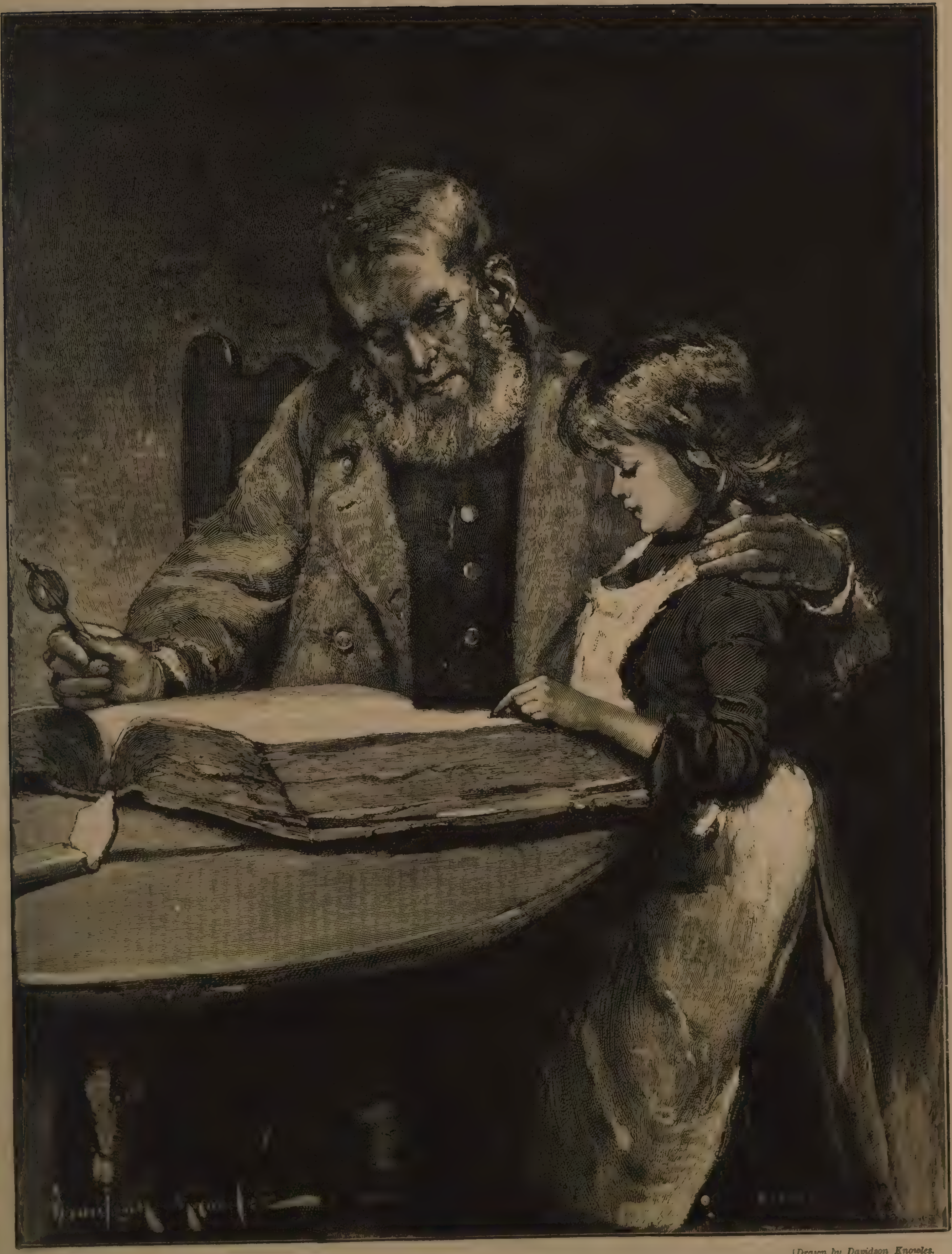
Funeral at Sea.—There is something painful and very melancholy at a sailor's funeral, or at the funeral of a passenger on a long voyage. Accident or disease may have caused the death; but when dead, the body, except under very extraordinary circumstances, must be committed to the deep. Gloom covers the ship's company—the body is wound in a sail cloth and a heavy weight appended to it that it may sink. If there be no chaplain on board, the captain reads the burial service, and the dead man is committed to the custody of the sea. The scene is well described in the following verses:—

Deep mists hung over the Mariner's grave,
  When the holy funeral rite was read;
And every breath on the dark blue wave
  Seemed hushed to hallow the friendless dead.

And heavily heaved on the gloomy sea,
  The ship that sheltered that homeless one,
As though her funeral hour should be
  When the waves were still and the winds were gone.

And there he lay in his coarse cold shroud,
  And strangers were round the coffinless;
Not a kinsman was seen among the crowd,—
  Not an eye to weep, nor a lip to bless.

But many a sigh, and many a tear,
  Shall be breathed, and shed, in the hours to come,
When the widow and fatherless shall hear
  How he died, far, far from his happy home.



[Drawn by Davidson Knowles.

Many an hour the child spent with the good old man.

IN TIME OF NEED.

'Yes, there's no doubt about the matter; my sight is failing very, very fast. Well, the Lord knows best, and He's helped me through many a trouble; He'll not fail me in this one; He will give me grace to help in time of need. I'll go to the hospital again to-day, and hear what the doctors have to say, for it is my duty as a Christian to make use of all the means the Lord has placed at my disposal, and then leave the results in His hands. He is too wise to err, too good to be unkind."

Half-an-hour later the good old man who had given utterance to these words might have been seen carefully wending his way to the railway station, a little distance from his home. A few minutes' journey in the train brought him to Broad-street Station, and from there he soon reached Moorfields Eye Infirmary.

Here he waited patiently to hear the doctor's opinion upon the state of his eyes. It was not his first visit, and he was not unprepared for the words the eminent oculist uttered after a most careful examination.

"I am sorry I cannot hold out any hope, my friend," he said; "I cannot advise an operation—it would, I am certain, be of no service. Don't attempt to try or tax the little sight you have left to you; you will be able to see a little; there will be some glimmering of light for some little time yet, I trust, and then ——"

"There will come days and nights of darkness," said Jasper, as the oculist paused. "Thank you kindly, sir, for so gently telling me the truth. Truth's always best, isn't it, sir? I know if anything could have been done, you'd have done it, I'm sure of that. I mustn't grieve too much, did you say, sir? No, I won't. The Lord has given me my sight for seventy years—it's hard if I can't serve Him a few years in the dark if this should prove to be His will. It won't be dark inside, sir, you may rely upon that; the Lord will shed light and gladness in my heart, I know He will. Good-bye, sir, may God bless you. My name, sir, did you say? It's down on my paper, Jasper Leigh, and my address."

Back again to his two rooms went Jasper. Tired with the little journey to and from town, he was glad to sit down in his armchair and rest. As he sat thinking about the doctor's words he heard a knock at the door.

"Come in," he said.

The door opened, and a fair, blue-eyed, golden-haired girl, some nine or ten years of age, entered.

"I'm Hope Tredenning," she said. "We are the new people, mother and I; we have the rooms just below yours; we only came yesterday."

"Ah, to be sure—to be sure you did, dear; I remember. You had a long journey, hadn't you?"

"Yes, we came all the way from Cornwall; we've always lived there—anyhow, ever since I was born, but now we're going to live near London. My father's a sailor, but he isn't going any very long voyages any more. He's going from London to Spain and back, and from Harwich to Rotterdam; so it will be better for him if we're near London."

"So it will, dear, so it will; he'll see more of his home. You were sorry to leave Cornwall, I expect?"

"Oh yes! I'm afraid I shall miss the sea dreadfully. Mother says one does miss it after always being used to it. And then I had to leave all my friends. There was one dear old woman, I called her granny, though she was no relation (she had ever so many grandchildren of her own, but I loved her just as much as they did), and I used to go and read to her.

"She used to like me to read to her; and to-day, you didn't see me, I know, but I watched you going out, and when I saw how slowly and carefully you walked, I thought you couldn't see very well, and I asked mother if I might come up and read to you sometimes."

"Well, well!" said Jasper, "truly, the Lord's ways are wonderful and past finding out. Why, my dear child," he added, turning to Hope, "the Lord has sent you to me in my time of need. I'm an old man, dear—seventy-one next birthday—and my wife and three children are away safe in heaven; and I'm going blind—I shall not be able to see the trees or birds or flowers soon, or read —— "

"Oh, I am sorry, so very, very sorry," said Hope, looking lovingly at the patient speaker; "and mother and father will be so sorry when I tell them. You'll let me read to you, won't you? I've got such a nice Bible of my own; I can bring it up any time, or I can read out of your big one. You will let me?"

Let her! There was no need to ask. Readily Jasper availed himself of the help the Lord in whom he trusted had provided for him in his time of need. Many an hour the child spent with the good old man reading the precious promises in God's Holy Word, and many a lesson remembered in after years was taught her by her new friend.

For some months after Hope's arrival, Jasper was still able to see dimly, then the last faint glimmering of light passed away.

For nearly two years he lived in a state of total blindness, never murmuring, and always deeply grateful for the kind attentions shown him by those who knew and loved him. Then there came a morning when Hope's mother, thinking he was late in rising, went to see if he needed any help. She gave one glance at the dear aged face that was resting so peacefully upon the pillow, and then passed quietly from the room.

"Our dear old friend has gone home, Hope," she said, a few moments later, to her child. "He is blind no longer, darling; he can 'see the King in His beauty.' If he could speak to us now he would tell us not to mourn, but to strive so to live that when our time to leave this world arrives, we may meet him in that beautiful city where 'they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light.'"

Jennie Perrett.

* * *

MOTHERLESS NEDDY.

A True Story.

Poor sad little Neddy! when but eight years old,
His dear mother died from privation and cold,
For his father was cruel, from drinking of gin,
And that was why poor little Ned grew so thin.

His father compelled him to go, day by day,
And beg from the people he met by the way;
And oft he was sent from the hovel at morn,
Without any breakfast, begrimed and forlorn.

As he went through the streets the lads, running wild,
Would cry out, "There goes Sam, the drunkard's lorn child;
His father drinks liquor, and that's why he goes
Half-starved and half-frozen, as every one knows."

When the poor little fellow for money would plead,
He knew in his heart that there was no need
For him to go begging for money or bread,
If his father kept sober and earned them instead.

One eve he returned to the hovel footsore,
And feeling that he could go begging no more,
Determined to seek for employment till gained,
If only a shilling a week he obtained.

When what was his grief in the sad home to see
A widow, who drank, sit taking her tea;
He shrank from her presence, and hastened to bed,
Without, e'en though hungry, a mouthful of bread.

He thought of his mother, the things she had taught;
He thought of the sorrow that strong drink had brought,
Then prayed, oh so earnest, that Jesus on high
Would save from that woman the motherless boy.

Next morning, ere daylight, she bade Ned arise,
And then, in loud accents, and with flashing eyes,
She said, "I'm your mother, and mind what I say,
To me bring the money you beg for to-day."

Ned's look at his father expressed his surprise;
"That woman my mother?" the tears filled his eyes.
"Yes, lad, she's your mother, and you must obey,
For if you do not she will send you away."

"Say not she's my mother," said Ned, with a cry.
"For you, dearest father, I'll work till I die;
But, oh that vile woman, please send her away,
And I'll be your good little Ned every day."

By a blow from her hand he was felled to the floor,
Then, lifting him up, he was thrust through the door:
Said she, "Go, you beggar, bring money to me,
If you do not I'll beat you till you cannot see."

From the blow and the fall his body did smart,
But, ah! what was that to the pain in his heart?
His father, a drunkard, had married another,
And she in the home had the place of his mother.

The morning was cold, and the winds they were wild,
But through the deep snow trudged the desolate child;
His clothes hung in rags, and his shoes they were worn,
And he trembled and shook like a lamb that is shorn.

But somehow or other the day wore away,
And Neddy had not begged a penny all day;
He had asked for work, but, ah! who would employ
A lad only known as the poor beggar boy?

When day faded out, and the stars glistened down,
And the lights here and there peeped out through the town,
Poor Neddy then sought for a place out of sight,
Where he might lie hid through the long winter's night.

To return to his home the child did not dare,
For when he'd no money his father would swear;
His stepmother's words, "Bring your money to me,
Or surely I'll beat you till you cannot see,"

Still rang in his ears, had been ringing all day,
And now filled his poor timid heart with dismay;
He thought of the blow he'd that morning received,
And that she would kill him he really believed.

He wandered along, and at length he espied
A broken-down shed, with a wagon inside;
His limbs were benumbed by the cold wintry blast,
But into the wagon he clambered at last.

A ragged horse blanket there poor Neddy found,
And his shivering form it was soon wrapped around;
With a prayer that the dear Lord his father would keep
From temptation and sin, he fell fast asleep.

He dreamed of his mother, his once happy home,
He dreamed of that land where no sorrow can come,
He dreamed that bright angels were guarding his bed,
And that for his hunger a feast had been spread.

But while he lay dreaming the night colder grew,
Till his feet and his ankles were frozen clean through;
The poor child had suffered so much through the day,
That now of his sufferings unconscious he lay.

Toward midnight a watchman with slow solemn tread
Passed by, as though nearing the place of the dead;
He halted (for surely a moan smote his ear),
Then called out most kindly, "Is any one here?"

No answer was given, so stepping inside,
He thought some poor wretch from his presence did hide,
He clutched at the wagon, and, to his dismay,
Found poor little Neddy, as freezing he lay.

From the wagon he lifted the unconscious Ned,
The blanket still round him; he feared he was dead—
Then tenderly, motherly, out through the storm,
He bore the poor child to the watch-house so warm.

As soon as the watchman his story had told,
The captain shed tears, he'd a son nine years old;
Said he, "Call a doctor to come in great haste,
For I'm sure that there is not a moment to waste."

The doctor examined the poor little lad,
Shook his head, and exclaimed, "This case is most sad;
His limbs to the knees have been frozen right through,
And must be removed, 'tis the best we can do."

To an hospital then little Ned was conveyed,
His limbs were removed, on a bed he was laid;
The kind-hearted matron smoothed back his soft hair,
And pressed a warm kiss on his forehead so fair.

Then he opened his eyes, and looked round the place,
And fixed his sad gaze on the kind woman's face.
He murmured just "Mother," 'twas all that he said,
Then closed his eyes gently—poor Neddy was dead.

How many poor Neddys we see all around;
Through all the great thoroughfares, there they are found—
They suffer from hunger, they suffer from cold,
They suffer from wrongs that have never been told.

"Feed My lambs," said our Lord to His servants of old,
For then, as now, many were out in the cold.
To heed His command, oh let that be our joy,
Remembering that Jesus was once a poor boy.

Jane Pardon.

CHIPPINGS.

Useful Knowledge.—During a violent storm in November, 1821, a vessel passing through the English Channel was driven ashore near Beechy Head, and the whole crew were washed overboard, four only being saved from immediate death by being thrown on the rocks on which the vessel struck. A lingering and terrible fate seemed to await them; for, although not under water, the waves appeared to be rapidly gaining on them. The darkness of the night and the violence of the storm prevented any help coming to them, and they sat awaiting the waves which roared around to engulf them at last, as they had their shipmates before.

In this terrible moment one of the sufferers, grasping a weed to hold himself more firmly on the rock, at once recognised it as the samphire, and, knowing that the samphire is never submerged by the sea, he felt assured that he could say to the waves "Hitherto shalt thou go, and no further." Trusting to the promise of this child of faith, the poor fellows remained stationary till the morning. They were not deceived; the sea, having reached its bounds, gradually retired, light broke on the shipwrecked seamen, and they were rescued from their perilous position.

Salt Mines.—It is stated that the salt mines of Nevada throw into the shade all others known in the United States. One bed is reported to cover 15,930 acres, and no bottom to this salt bed has ever been discovered. As deep as the work has gone the bed is solid rock salt, and from a depth of thirty-five feet the salt water comes so rapidly as to prevent work without efficient pumping arrangements. The salt water wells up to the surface and overflows the large floor, from which the fine white salt is continually gathered. This floor, several acres in area, has been so well levelled that the water flows evenly over it, and thus by exposure to the atmosphere it rapidly evaporates, leaving a stratum of fine white salt. The yield and production go on continually, and the more rapidly it is removed the better the quality of this salt.

Eggs.—Of eggs, Great Britain imported in 1891 to the number of 106,811,370 dozen. Canada had in previous years been sending only a few, but in 1891 she sent 2,269,757 dozen.

THE SARDINE FISHERY.

Facing the stormy Atlantic, to the south of the rugged picturesque Breton coast, the little quiet lonely town of Concarneau nestles in the embrace of a deep bay.

The place is beautifully situated among rocks and hills. The climate is healthful and bracing, but the cold of winter is tempered by the flow of the Gulf Stream, which rolls its warm waters round the coast. Here the camellias and the fuchsias grow out of doors, and often as early as February sweet spring awakens and clothes the earth with beauty and verdure once more.

The bay of Concarneau affords a perfectly safe anchorage for boats, on account of its sheltered position; the isles of Glenau forming a sort of natural bulwark, and acting as a breakwater. This is of special benefit to the little town, which can boast of but one great industry—the sardine fishery—for which it has become quite famous, as the trade has increased and developed, and large quantities of fish have been exported to Great Britain and other countries.

It is said that the true sardine is abundant only in the Mediterranean Sea, and though found also in the southern waters of the Atlantic, the principal fisheries are in connection with Mediterranean ports.

If this is true, a large portion of the fish caught as sardines off the French coast are juvenile sprats, and the young herrings and pilchards, to which the true sardine (*Clupea Sardina*) is closely allied.

Whether, however, the sardines caught off the coast of Brittany are the real article, or the admirable substitute supplied by its near relatives, is a matter of little moment; for when the fish have lost their heads, have gone through the curing process, and are hermetically sealed up in oil, they would probably tell us, could they speak, that by whatever name they may have been known while disporting themselves in the ocean, now they are all *true sardines.*

The Sardine Fishing Fleet.

At Concarneau, during the long fishing season, which lasts from May till November, a fleet of from five hundred to six hundred boats is employed almost entirely in fishing for sardines.

In the earliest dawning the boats leave the port, looking like myriad spectral ships, as with all sail set they glide ghostly and silent out of the smooth harbour.

By ten o'clock the more fortunate of the fishermen have filled their vessels, and are already returning, and the others follow in rapid succession. Then suddenly on the quay, which had been till now deserted and quiet, an animated scene meets the gazer's eye. The whole place is alive with an eager throng, foremost among whom are the men whose business it is to unload the boats, and who—being Frenchmen—do not work altogether silently.

Most of the fish is carried in baskets, or on little carts, to the curing place. But among the regular workers are many women who collect the fish in their own baskets, sprinkling it with salt as they do so; while mingling with this group of

business-like folk are occasional visitors, who have come down to the quay to lay in a stock of fresh provision for their own households.

There is no end of bustle and hurry, for the sun is hot, and the fish will not keep. The work must be done quickly, or it cannot be done at all; and the high pressure at which the people toil gives a zest and a spirit of interest to the scene.

In a very few hours the long files of boats ranged at the quay are emptied of their silvery slippery contents; the nets are all hung out to dry, and the fishermen have once more put their vessels into ship-shape for the next departure.

Then the fires are lighted in the cuddy of each boat, and the men set to work to cook their afternoon meal, which consists of potatoes and some of the larger fish taken in the net with the sardines. The cooking is simple and primitive enough. The fish, cut into pieces, is thrown into the pot where the potatoes have been boiling, and all stews together for awhile, when it is served in bowls, and eaten with wooden spoons, making a very wholesome and nourishing fish soup.

Their repast over, the fishermen wrap themselves in their coats, and lie down to take the sleep and rest which they have so well earned, and which is needed to fit them for their labours on the next day, when all that we have described is enacted over again.

Last year the number of sardines caught at Concarneau alone was estimated at two hundred and thirty millions of fish. But this is rather an exceptionally large amount.

The curing of the sardines is done as rapidly as possible, and the process is as follows :— First, they are carefully washed and sprinkled with salt; the heads are cut off, and the fish spread out on willow branches, or on wire-work, in a free current of air. Next, they are put into boiling oil, where they remain for a short time; then they are taken out, and the oil is drained away as much as possible. When this has been done, they are laid in their tin boxes, in the neat compact way so familiar to all eaters of this dainty relish, and the boxes being then filled up with seasoned oil, the lid of the case is soldered down.

Even then the whole process is not complete. The boxes of fish are exposed for a short time to steam, or put into boiling water. Any case that gives way, leaks, or bursts under this test is rejected, but those that remain sound are now ready to be packed and exported.

In the South of France, sardines are sometimes cured in red wine, and these are called *Sardines Anchoisées*, or anchovied sardines.

Probably most of our readers have eaten these delicious little fish; but it is possible that many know little or nothing of the preparation needful before the tiny inhabitant of the ocean is ready to hand at our tables. To such our brief sketch may be interesting as giving a glimpse of one branch of a great industry, employing many hands, and converting into wholesome and pleasant food some of the teeming treasures of the sea.

M. E. R.

ELIZABETH ZANE, THE HEROINE.

She sped on with her treasure.

THE wickedest man of the early period of Ohio history was Simon Girty, who commanded the Indian allies which were induced to fight against the colonists. Girty was as cruel as the worst Red savage, and there are many traditions in the Sandusky valley of his raids and outrages.

In the year 1777 Fort Henry, which was situated on the Ohio river, near Wheeling, garrisoned by forty-two men, was suddenly attacked by Girty with a force of five hundred Indians.

Girty succeeded in killing thirty of the garrison, leaving but twelve to defend the fort. Among the women and children was young Elizabeth Zane, a beautiful girl of seventeen. The twelve soldiers, commanded by Colonel Shepherd, were good marksmen, and knowing surrender meant death for their wives and children as well as for themselves, they resolved to fight to the last. But alas! bravery availed them little, for it was not long before the small stock of powder in the fort was almost exhausted, and only a few charges remained to each man.

In despair the Colonel called his brave little band together, and told them that at a house some sixty yards outside the fort, which their enemies had not yet dared approach, there was a keg of gunpowder. Whoever should try and bring it into the fort would be in peril of his life from the Indians. He had not the heart to order any man such a task, but the powder was their only hope, and therefore it was his duty to ask if any one of them was brave enough to volunteer the undertaking. Instantly three or four men avowed themselves ready, but only one man could be spared.

But, while they were generously disputing among themselves for the perilous errand, Elizabeth Zane approached the Colonel, and begged that she might be allowed to go for the powder. Her request was promptly refused, but she persisted earnestly, and finally it was agreed that she should make the first trial.

When all was ready the gate opened, and Elizabeth walked rapidly across the open space towards the house where the powder was stored. Those inside the fort could plainly see that the eyes of the Indians were upon her; but, either from curiosity or mercy, they allowed her to pass safely and to enter the house. Her friends drew a breath of relief, and watching even more anxiously for her reappearance, saw her come out soon, bearing the powder in a table-cloth tied round her waist.

By this time the Indians suspected her burden, and in a moment more, as she was hastening toward the fort, they sent after her a shower of bullets and arrows. They all, however, whistled by her harmless, and with wild, startled eye, but undaunted heart, she sped on with her treasure through the deadly missiles, until at last she bore it in triumph inside the gate. By the aid of the powder and the enthusiastic courage which Elizabeth's self-sacrifice inspired, the little garrison was enabled to hold out until relief came to them. And so the noble act of a young girl saved the lives of all within the fort, and vanquished its five hundred dusky assailants. The Zane family became well known in Southern Ohio, and gave their name to the beautiful city of Zanesville.

Similar self-sacrifice has often been exhibited by both men and women, who have not counted their lives dear unto themselves in carrying, not gunpowder to destroy, but the Gospel to save men's lives. While physical bravery is only necessary in a few cases to the servants of Christ, moral courage is essential to every one who seeks to witness a good confession before an ungodly world. The injunction St. Paul gave to his fellow-soldiers is equally binding upon us, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong."

THE BIBLE IN THE BARN.

A DISTRIBUTOR of Bibles once called at a house where he met with an angry repulse. The occupier would not suffer a Bible to be left at his house.

"If left anywhere," said he, "it shall be left at the barn."

"Very well," the distributor meekly replied; "I do not know that I could select a better place for it: our blessed Saviour once lay in a manger!"

He went quickly to the barn, and laid the sacred treasure in a safe place, with much prayer that it might bless even him who would not allow it to enter his house.

The man, struck with the unexpected reply of the distributor, was led to think of the Saviour's birthplace, and of his own rashness and guilt.

After two or three days his distress became so great, that he went out to the barn in search of the rejected volume. He turned to the passage which records the circumstances connected with the birth of the Holy Redeemer, and repented and consecrated himself to God, through faith in Christ wrought in him by the Holy Spirit.

The once spurned book now not only found a place in his house, but its truths were received into his heart, and controlled his life.

WHAT AN APPLE DID.

YES, an apple, a rosy-cheeked apple, which, if you had seen it, would, as I daresay you might have expressed it, "Have made your mouth water."

The time I am speaking of was many years ago; but apples were the same then as they are now, and boys were, as far as I know, the same too. So that the boy who was eating this same rosy-cheeked apple was enjoying it very much.

Willie was sitting on the grass as he munched it,—not the fresh green grass which you who live in the country see around you, for Willie lived in London, and in a poor part of the city. At the back of his house was a small plot which *he* called a garden;

but in it were only a shrub or two, black and grimy, and a bit of grass which looked as dingy as grass could look.

But Willie did not know anything better, so he sat there pretty contented with his apple. Presently, as he took a deep bite, he came to the pips. "What *are* these odd black things?" he thought; and he went indoors to ask.

He was told they were the seeds, and that it was from these that apple-trees grew. "I wonder *how* they grow," thought Willie again, "and where they grow, and what an apple-tree is like! I wish I knew."

You see he had never been in the country, and had never learnt the many things which children learn at school in the present day.

Willie finished his apple, but he did not finish his thoughts about it. He kept turning it over and over in his mind, and at last a bright idea struck him. "I know!" he said; "I will get a place at a nurseryman's, and then I shall soon know all I want to know." And so he did.

He was getting a big boy now, and as he was quick and observant, he made swift progress. He watched the apple-trees; he delighted in all the plants he saw, and soon grew skilful in tending them. But better than the knowledge of flowers was something else the nurseryman taught him.

He was a Christian, and under his influence Willie became in time a Christian too. He learnt that the Creator of these fair flowers was his God and Father through Jesus Christ, and he gave his heart to Him. More than that—he so wished to give his whole life to Him, it ended in his becoming a missionary; and he passed from the nursery-garden to the far-off islands of the Pacific.

There you may be sure the lovely blossoms of the tropics rejoiced his heart; but they were not the first objects of his life now: to teach the heathen about the Lord Jesus and His great salvation was the purpose for which the Rev. William Ellis (for that was his name) went, and for which he laboured night and day.

It is a beautiful thing to rear flowers for our earthly gardens; but how far more beautiful to prepare plants—human plants—for the Paradise of God! It is good and useful to learn earthly knowledge, but how far more important to possess the knowledge of life eternal!

Solomon says, "Get wisdom, and with all thy getting, get understanding." And you know what he calls "wisdom" is only another name for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us be sure then that we have Him, and that we have got this best "wisdom" of all in our hearts. We have a Teacher who will tell us all we want to know. The Holy Spirit is always ready, always near, only waiting to be asked. He will make the promise true to every dear child wanting to know more about Jesus, "Then shall they know, when they follow on to know the Lord."

And if you first love Him, you need not be afraid to love earthly knowledge. You need not be afraid to love flowers, and all the many things which He has given us to make us happy. They will all fall into their proper places if we once put Him *first*. And whether He lead us in the simple path of everyday life, or whether He calls us, like Willie, to some high or noble work for Him, it will not much matter if we are trying to please Him.

TALKING WITH JESUS.

Two Mongol Tartar chiefs went from the borders of China to St. Petersburg, to examine the arts and manners of the Europeans. They were represented as the most ingenious and noble of their tribes.

During their stay, among other things, a German clergyman engaged them to assist him in preparing a translation of the Gospels into the language of their country, and they spent some time every day in study.

At length the work was completed, the last correction was made, and the book was closed on the table before them. Still they sat, serious and silent. The minister inquired the cause; and was equally surprised and delighted, to hear them both avow themselves converts to the truths of the blessed volume.

"At home," they said, "we studied the sacred writings of the Chinese, and the more we read, the more obscure they seemed; the longer we have read the Gospel, the more simple and intelligible it becomes, until at last it seems as if Jesus was talking with us."

JUST TOO LATE.

A TRAVELLER was once leaving a seaport town in France on his return to England. He had taken his passage in a night steamer, and the evening light was just falling as he went on board. There were not many passengers, but still there was all the bustle that usually attends the departure of a packet.

In one part especially there was a sound of angry voices. A young man was apparently driving a bargain with one of the passengers, and asking from him more than he was inclined to pay. But the time was now up, and the captain came to tell him he must go on shore. Intent upon his business he went on just the same.

Again and again the captain reminded him that the vessel was just going to put off from land; at last he could wait no longer, the signal was given, the bell rung, the landing stage taken away, and the vessel began to move. Then, and not till then, the hapless youth realised what he had done. He sprang to the side, and would have leapt across, or tried to do so, had not the captain forcibly held him back. "It is too late now," he said; "you must go with me to England."

The steamer went on its way, and was soon out of sight of land. It was a bright moonlight night, and the traveller paced the deck alone, enjoying the calm loveliness of the scene, and holding communion with Him who holds the waters in the hollow of His hand. All at once the sound of sobbing reached his ears; and going to that part of the boat from whence it came, he found the young man who was being taken against his will to a foreign land.

"I 'm sorry for you," said the gentleman; "but why did you not get off when the captain told you he was just going to start?"

"Oh, I did not think he meant it; I did not mean to be too late, and now, oh dear! what shall I do? what shall I do?" and a fresh burst of sorrow choked his voice.

The gentleman gathered from him presently that he feared he would lose his situation, and that as he had a widowed mother dependent on him, the loss would be hers as well as his own. He promised to write to his employer and intercede for him; but the young man only shook his head, and repeated in despair, "Just too late!"

"Too late! too late!" oh, are there any words more terrible than these? In the fulness of your health and strength Jesus calls to you, and says, "Come unto Me." He says, "Come now." He offers you life and salvation, pardon and peace, if you will only turn *from* your sins and turn *towards* Him. He says—"The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God," and that "The time is short."

But you don't believe He means what He says. You think there is plenty of time. You go on seeking after pleasure, buying and selling, and bargaining, haggling about the gold that perisheth, till at last comes sickness, accident, *death*, and the door is shut. It is too late—too late—just too late! You cannot enter now. You cannot leap across the gulf. As the tree falls, so it must lie.

God's mercy has been waiting for you, but now it waits no longer, it is changed into "the wrath of the Lamb." The Spirit *has* been pleading, but now it pleads no more. "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched forth My hand, and no man regarded. . . . I also will laugh at your calamity. I will mock when your fear cometh."

But thank God that time is not come yet. Now is the day of salvation, and not yet too late. Oh, be wise, and choose this very day life and safety in Christ. It did not take Noah long to step into the ark. One moment he was outside, the next he had left the perishing world the other side the door, and "the Lord shut him in."

"Only a step to Jesus, then why not take it now?" Yes, come as you are, come *at once;* and be safe in the ark for time and for eternity.

TINKER, TAILOR, AND THE REST OF THEM; OR, MRS. WATSON'S SEVEN LODGERS.

No. V.—APOTHECARY.

Took aback—that's what I was! There ain't no other name for it. Nor I shan't never forget, neither, all that passed that evenin' that Mr. Farley called in so unexpected on me and Jacob, and asked us if we'd any rooms to let, as he was in want of two.

"We have, sir," says I, "but they ain't nice enough for the likes of you." For we knowed—me and my husband did—as how, till a while ago, Mr. Farley'd been master of the biggest chemist's shop in that neighbourhood, and had lived in the house as was built over it.

Mr. Farley smiled as I said them words, and says he, "Mrs. Watson, the likes of me might do very much worse than make a home with you. You see," says he, "it's like this. My partner, Richard Compton, after making a terrible blunder or two, which nearly brought us into the criminal court, decamped one night with all the cash and some papers which were of great value.

"And when, after he had gone, I came to look into his department of the work, I found he had left behind him no end of unpaid bills, and everything at loose ends.

"There was no money to meet these bills. He had received a whole quarter's payments just before he left, and had gone off with them.

"Nothing remained for me but to sell up. With the money I got for the sale of my stock, my furniture, and general belongings," says he, "I paid the debts. And now I'm going to be assistant to Mr. Toptree in Germaine Street, close by; so if I may have your two rooms I shall be quite comfortable, being a bachelor, as you know."

Then up and speaks my Jacob, and he says, "Sir, me and my wife we shall be that proud of you for a lodger, as we shan't hardly know ourselves. And we'll do all we can for you—that we will. Won't us, dear?"

"Ay, indeed, Jacob!" says I.

So then the business was soon settled, and in a day or two Mr. Farley came in, bag and baggage; and a pattern lodger he turned out to be, givin' no trouble, and allers considerin' for us, and makin' our little dooties for him the greatest pleasure possible.

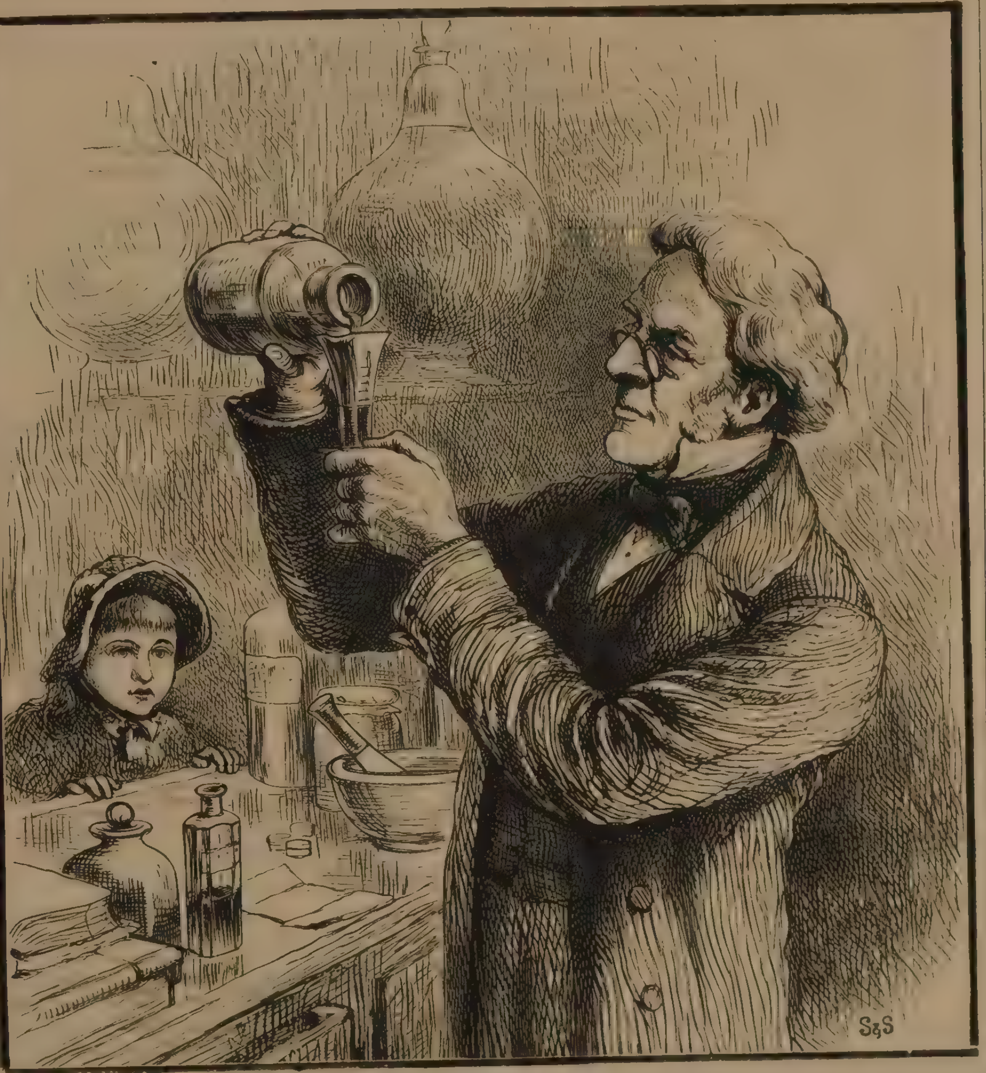
But the thing as astonished us most about him was the patient, cheerful way he took his trouble. Never no grumblin', nor regrettin'; not so much as a word of complaint at his narrer quarters, after the nice house he'd been used to live in.

And another cur'us thing about him was that we never heard him talk agen Mr. Richard Compton as had brought him into all this trouble. After that one evenin' when he told us how everythink had came about, all he ever said of him was—

"Ah, poor fellow! Drink and gambling were his ruin. So much good as there was in him too! Sad—terribly sad!"

Mr. Farley never *talked* much about religion, but he did better—he *lived* it. Somehow or other, as I growed into the knowledge of his quiet gentle ways, and that peaceful face of his as he came out of his room of a mornin', them words allers rose up afore me as though they was wrote out in letters of gold—"*Been with Jesus, and learned of Him.*"

And I couldn't help but feel as though he lived so near to the Lord, that if at dawnin' of some day he was to awake up unexpected—his soul free at last—beautiful in the glory of the Master's likeness—why he could hardly be more "*satisfied*" than he seemed now.



"He poured the stuff out into the measurin' glass."

Mr. Farley, though he'd had a fine shop of his own, was the best assistant, Mr. Toptree said, that he ever had. And, after a bit, lots of Farley and Compton's old customers commenced comin' to Toptree's, glad to see their old friend again, and knowin' they could trust to his care in makin' up the physic, so as they shouldn't all be poisoned.

In six months Mr. Toptree's bizness growed so much bigger, that he raised his assistant's salary; for, says he, "Mr. Farley, it isn't fair you should reap no profit on the custom you're bringing me." Which no one couldn't deny this same, it bein' truth.

A year passed, and near the whole of another; but early in December month, somethink happened.

One night my Jacob he didn't come in punctual as usual. I was waitin' for him in the kitchen, and wonderin' what had kep' him, when at last I hear him put the key in the lock and lift the latch. Without goin' into the passage (I was makin' tea and had the kettle in my hand at the moment), I called to him—

"Why, Jacob dear, what makes you so late to-night?"

But Jacob he didn't answer—and then what did I hear but the shufflin' of two men's feet outside the kitchen door. And the next minute in comes my husband, holdin' up and supportin' another man—a man what looked that bad as I never set eyes on, not afore nor yet since.

"My dear," says my Jacob, "I found this poor feller sittin' on a doorstep, too ill to move; and as our house was so near, I thought I'd bring him here for a hot cup o' tea, afore I took him to the hospital."

"Quite right, Jacob!" says I; and with that I wheeled the big armchair in from the parlour, close to the kitchen fire, and the stranger he sat down, his face blue with cold, his teeth chatterin', his limbs all of a tremble.

"Hadn't we better send for a doctor, wife?" says Jacob; "maybe it wouldn't be safe to move him at all to-night." But at that the sick man opens his eyes and says, "Don't send for a medical man. I know what's the matter with me, and what will do me good. Give me a bit of paper and a pencil, will you please?"

Jacob fetched him what he wanted, and little Bessie Romer from next door, she run off to Toptree's with it.

"It were your lodger hisself as give it me," says she when she came back with the bottle; "and afore he poured the stuff out into the measurin' glass, he looked mighty hard at the writin', but he didn't say nothin'."

Well, the sick man took the dose, but it didn't seem to help him much, and we both see it wouldn't do to move him to the hospital, not that night, so we made him up a bed on the kitchen floor.

It wasn't more 'n an hour after this that Mr. Farley came home from the shop.

"You're more 'n half a doctor, sir," says I to him, as I helps him off with his coat in the passage; "would you please come into the kitchen and see a poor soul as my Jacob found shiverin' on a doorstep, too bad to move on alone?"

Well, Mr. Farley he says, "Certainly, Mrs. Watson, with pleasure;" and he follers me into the kitchen, and as he gets near to the mattress on the floor, the stranger turns his head, and the eyes of them two men meet.

The sick man he just groans out, "My God! It's Farley!" But t'other he says nothin' till he kneels down aside of the bed; and then he takes the thin wasted hand in his, and he says, so tender and pitiful—

"My poor Compton, what a sad time you must have had to bring you to this!"

"And is that all you've got to say to me, Farley?" whispers Mr. Compton. "Have you no hard words, no reproaches for the man that ruined you?"

"As I myself hope for pardon—none!" says our lodger. "My dear fellow," says he, "let bygones be bygones. Forgetting the things that are behind, let us press forward to those that are before, looking unto Jesus." So fur as this me and Jacob heard, afore we went away and left 'em a few moments alone together.

Well, it were a long sharp illness that poor Mr. Compton was in for that evenin'. Just arrived from abroad, he'd got drinkin' and gamblin' as soon as he came ashore, and fallin' among thieves, he'd been robbed of all he had about him. Then he'd been took ill, and must have died if my Jacob hadn't found him.

As it was, his life hung on a thread, as you might say, for weeks, while we three took care on him, one or another on us, as we could make time.

But the Lord He heard our prayers, and sent His angel of healin', and while, in His mercy, He made the poor body whole again, He give him a new heart too.

For the Richard Compton as got up from that sick bed wasn't, by no manner of means, the man as laid hisself down there. Old things had passed away; behold all things was made new.

For, through the Christ-like spirit of that there lodger of ours, the man that had wronged him so sore caught a glimpse of the lovin' patient gentle Jesus Hisself, seein' Him as He'd been standin' for years at the door of His heart sayin', "*Behold, I stand at the door and knock.*"

The knock had come once more, louder than ever this time; and the soul at last had rose up and opened wide, and let in the Beloved to be his guest for ever.

And now what's left to tell of my lodger? Well, for awhile Mr. Toptree took Richard Compton as second assistant, after he got about again, and so once more the two former partners was workin' together.

But there's many changes, for good as well as for ill; and God so ordered it that just about that time Mr. Toptree's old uncle—a wholesale chemist and druggist in London—died, leavin' his business and property to his nephew.

In course the nephew didn't want to keep on with his shop after this, so he made a sort of 'rangement with Mr. Farley to take it off his hands, payin' him so much of the profits every year for the fust few years, after which it was to be his final.

So "*Farley & Compton*" was wrote up in big letters above "*Late Toptree*," over the shop-winder; and all the old customers come back, havin' a mind to help Mr. Compton to live down his disgrace, and to show their respect for Mr. Farley for makin' it possible for him so to do.

After that we lost our lodger, in course, which he and his partner lived together over the shop. But we see him quite frequent, and, knowin' what we does of him, we ain't like to forget the lesson he taught us.

I tell you, dear friends, it warn't till I came to know Mr. Farley that I rightly understood them words in Genesis, I don't know if I've got 'em *quite* right—

"*God made man in His own image, in the image of God created He him.*"

M. E. Ropes.

NAT, THE QUARRYMAN.

By Eglanton Thorne,

Author of "Nathan Quilter's Fall," etc.

Chapter IX.—Little Mary's Guardian.

WITH strangely solemn feelings Nat passed down the village street and took his way to the cliffs. The sky was aglow with the radiance of the setting sun. Its last level rays made a golden pathway across the waves. Nat was hardly of a poetic nature, yet it struck him that the yellow glory seemed as though it might mark the entrance to the heaven to which his friend was passing.

To the right, almost on the edge of the cliff and exposed to every wind that blew, stood the small grey church with its square tower. The vicarage lay below the hill, and was out of sight. With sudden resolution Nat turned his steps towards the lane that led down to it.

The vicar had been made happy on the previous day by the arrival of his youngest son with his wife from Australia. They were all seated at the dining-table, but there was only wine and fruit before them; when the servant came in to say that Nat Youlton was at the door, and wished to speak to Mr. Trelawney.

"Nat Youlton!" repeated the vicar, in a tone of considerable surprise; and at once he rose and went out.

"Good evening, Youlton," he said, advancing to the hall door; "you want to speak with me?"

"If you please, sir; if I'm not making over-bold.'

"By no means. I am glad to see you. Come in."

And the vicar led the way to his study.

"Now then, what can I do for you?" he asked briskly, as he seated himself at his writing-table and motioned Youlton to take a seat.

But Nat remained standing.

"I've come to you, sir," he said, "because I want to take the pledge."

The parson looked up in surprise; he had not expected anything like this. And now, as he glanced at Nat, it struck him that Miss Trotter had not been altogether mistaken in what she had said about the man. He *was* changed. He had a graver air, and he spoke in a more respectful manner than he had been wont to display; but there was besides a subtle something in his bearing which the vicar could not have defined, but which made him feel that Nat Youlton was not quite the man he had been.

"To take the pledge?" repeated Mr. Trelawney; "do you mean that you want to become a teetotaler?"

"Yes, that's it, sir. I want to bind myself never to touch strong drink again. I don't know how it's done; but I thought that you, being a parson, would know all about it."

The parson cleared his throat, and looked about him in some perplexity. He had never before been asked to administer such a pledge. He was not himself a total abstainer, though he believed total abstinence to be desirable for some persons, and he had no practical acquaintance with the work of Temperance Societies.

"You are wise to resolve to give up the drink altogether if you find it a temptation to you," he said; "but about the pledge—I suppose I ought to have a form to fill in, or a printed card for you to sign? If you don't mind waiting a day or two I will write to the secretary of the Church of England Temperance Society, and ask him to send me the proper thing."

"Can't you just write it down yourself, sir?" Nat asked. "All I want is to see it in black and white that I promise never to touch the drink again. Can't you write it on a bit of paper and let me put my name to it?"

"Certainly I can," said the vicar, taking a sheet of paper and dipping his pen in the ink.

"Will this do?" he asked a minute later; and he read—

"I, Nat Youlton, quarryman, of Trevena, hereby pledge myself to abstain from all intoxicating liquor from this time forth."

"I'd like it better, sir, if you'd say that I'll never touch a drop for the rest of my life."

"Very well," said the vicar, with a smile; and he re-wrote it in Nat's phraseology.

Then, with some difficulty—for he was no penman—Nat added his name to the paper. The vicar folded the paper, and handed it to Nat.

"If you please, sir, I'd rather you would keep it," said Nat; "then, if ever you hear of my going to the 'Sportsman's Arms' again, or taking a glass with any one, you can bring it up against me."

"I do not think I shall need to do that," said Mr. Trelawney; "I fancy you are one to hold your resolve without any bond. But, see, I will keep this copy of the pledge. Just write your name here, and the one paper will be as good as the other. Now, tell me, what made you think of doing this? Did Miss Trotter advise it?"

"No, sir. It was not her made me think of it; it was because Mrs. Trewarne——"

He checked himself. His interview with the dying woman would be a sacred memory with him as long as he lived; he could not repeat what had passed between them.

"Ah, it was Mrs. Trewarne," said the parson, looking interested. "Poor woman, I fear she is on her deathbed. I hope to visit her to-morrow morning."

"Then perhaps you wouldn't mind telling her that you have seen me sign this?"

"Certainly, I will tell her; I am sure she will be pleased to hear it."

And Nat went away, leaving the vicar to wonder at the influence the frail little woman had gained over the huge quarryman.

Mr. Trelawney went back into the room, where his son and daughter awaited his return, and told them of the transaction in which he had been engaged.

"Who is this Nat Youlton?" asked the vicar's son. "Edith has just reminded me that we heard his name mentioned on our voyage home."

"He is a great strong fellow who works in the quarries," said his father; "he has lived in Trevena all his life, and he is forty years of age, so you ought to remember him, Reginald."

"I believe I remember him," said Mr. Reginald; "had he not a very pretty sister?"

"Yes, yes, poor Mary," said the vicar, hastily; "but how came you to hear anything about him?'

"It was I who heard of him from the stewardess who waited on me," said Mrs. Trelawney; "I was ill during the early part of the voyage, and she was very good to me. I took quite a fancy to her, for she was so gentle in her bearing, and looked so sad. One day I was talking to her about our arrival in England, and happened to say that we were going to Trevena, in Cornwall. The name seemed to startle her, and I asked her if she knew this place. To my surprise she said that she had been brought up here—and we talked a little about Trevena—and she asked me if I knew anything of a man named Nat Youlton. She wanted to know if he still lived here; but, of course, I could not say, and when I asked Reginald he did not know either."

"What was her name?" asked the vicar.

"Bruce—she was a widow. I could not get her to tell me what was her maiden name."

"And her age?"

"About forty, I should suppose; but I think she is a woman who has known much trouble; and that often makes people look older than they are."

"Ah, well, if she was young when Nat Youlton was she would be likely to remember him, for he was a smart handsome fellow, over-wild, unfortunately, but one likely to strike a woman's fancy."

The parson visited Mrs. Trewarne on the following day, and read and prayed by her bedside. He did not forget to tell her how Nat Youlton had signed the pledge; and he was struck with the look of thankfulness that lit up her countenance as she heard his words. But she said little about it—she was too weak to utter an unnecessary word.

Ill as she was, it seemed to him that she might linger in that state for many weeks. But it was not to be so. There had been some bright autumn days, lovely as October days can be, and then came a sudden change.

A wintry wind blew from the north over the downs, and sea and sky wore a grey gloomy aspect. The sick woman had no power to resist the touch of cold. She sank rapidly, and within a week her spirit had passed to the home above.

"And what is to become of the little girl?" asked the parson, as he heard the news.

He was seated on his horse before Mrs. Jowett's gate, at which she stood, wiping her eyes with her apron—for she had just been telling him every particular concerning the widow's last moments.

"Nat Youlton came and took her away this morning. It seems, from what he told me, that there was an understanding between him and the poor mother, that he should have little Mary when she was gone. The little maid took to him wonderfully; she would go to him when she would not go to any one else. And he can afford to keep her, for he earns good wages when he likes.

"He's terribly fond of the little maid," continued Mrs. Jowett, "and I do believe he means to do better, for I've seen a change in Nat Youlton of late. He's quieter and more steady like than he used to be."

"You're right, there *is* a change," replied the parson, "I've noticed it myself. And who knows what good it may do Nat Youlton to have the charge of this little child?"

"A little child shall lead them," he murmured to himself as he rode on down the hill. But every one was not inclined to take the matter as calmly as did the vicar.

Already the news that Nat Youlton had carried the motherless child to his cottage and meant to bring her up as his own had gone abroad through the village, and the feminine mind was greatly excited on the subject.

"Did you ever hear of such a thing?" said Mrs. Rush, with whom the parson presently paused to chat. "A wild rough fellow like Nat Youlton to have the charge of that innocent child! It ought not to be allowed."

"Is any one else prepared to take her?" asked the parson.

"Why, no, not as I know of; but there's orphanages for such children, where they will be properly taught and cared for."

"Ah, but I believe the little girl would be happier with Nat than she would be in an orphanage."

"What! with a drunken brawling fellow like that?"

"Not so fast, Mrs. Rush. I don't believe Nat Youlton's a drunkard. Have you ever seen him intoxicated?"

"No, I have not, certainly."

"Do you know any one who has?"

"I can't say that I do; but if he's not a drunkard, he's fond of his glass."

"I daresay; so are a good many other men."

"And he's always at the 'Sportsman's Arms.'"

"I don't think he will be seen there again," said the vicar, quietly. "What would you say, Mrs. Rush, if I told you that Nat Youlton had signed the pledge?"

"I'd not believe it."

"It's true though, nevertheless. He signed it in my presence last Thursday evening."

"You don't mean it? But he'll not keep it."

"Don't be too ready to say that," exclaimed the parson, beginning to feel indignant with the woman's unbelief; "I believe that we shall see Nat Youlton a changed man yet I begin to have hope of him."

"He'll need to change a good deal before he'll be fit to take charge of a dear little child like that," responded Mrs. Rush. "What can a man like him know about children? and who is to look after her when he is away at his work, I should like to know?"

"I can't say; but I shall go and see Nat to-morrow, and tell him that I shall expect him to bring the child to church on Sundays. Good-day, Mrs. Rush;" and the parson rode on.

"You *may* tell him," murmured Mrs. Rush, as she retreated into her house.

"How hard people are upon those who go wrong!" said the parson to himself as he rode away. "One would think to hear them talk that it was quite impossible for a man to reform. Do we not often hinder the rèturn of the prodigals by our harsh judgments and doubting words? In the parable the father saw his son when he was a great way off, and ran to meet him; but that is not often our way."

He did not fail to make his call on Nat on the following day. He went soon after noon, when he judged that Nat was likely to be at home, getting his dinner.

He found Nat seated at the table with little Mary on his knee. He was carefully feeding her with spoonfuls of soup, which had a very savoury smell. The child, too young to understand her great loss, looked perfectly happy and at home with the big man.

A woman's eye might have noticed the unusual cleanliness and order that reigned in Nat's room. Nat had risen very early that morning in order that he might scrub the floor of his room as thoroughly as if it were the deck of a man-of-war, and brighten everything up as well as he knew how. His house seemed worthy of his best attention now that he wanted to make it a pleasant home for little Mary.

"Well, Youlton," said the parson, as he entered, "they tell me you have taken a strange duty on yourself; but you seem to be equal to it."

"Yes, I hope so, sir," said Nat, smiling; "I think we shall be able to get on together, little Mary and me."

"But what will you do with her whilst you are at work? She is surely too young a child to be left here alone."

"She is that, sir. I shouldn't be easy for a moment to think of her wandering about here alone, and perhaps falling into one of them pits. But there's a widow woman lives up on the hill with a large family, and I've arranged with her that her eldest girl shall come here every day to wash and dress Mary, and to be with her whilst I am away. I am going to give the girl sixpence a day for her trouble"

"Come, that's a good plan. You know how to manage, I see, Nat. But it's a solemn thing to have the charge of a little child. I hope you feel that?"

"I do, sir; I feel it more than I did at first. I feel it so much that I would not dare attempt it if—indeed her mother would not have wished me to if——"

"If what?" asked the parson as Nat hesitated.

"If I were not a new man, sir."

"A new man!" repeated the parson in surprise.

"A new man in Christ Jesus," said Nat; "those were her words, and they're true. There's words like them in the Bible. 'If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new.' But I've no need to tell you, who know the Bible so much better than I do."

"And do you feel, Youlton, that you're a new man in Christ Jesus?"

"I know it, thank God. I could hardly believe at first that there could be salvation for such a sinner as I; but she said it, and when I came to look in my mother's old Bible, there it was plain enough. 'I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.' 'They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.' Over and over again I found it, put in one way or another. Why, it was just that I reckon that made the Pharisees so spiteful against Him. 'This man receiveth sinners,' they said. That's a blessed truth, though, when you know yourself to be a lost sinner. So I just took the Lord at His word, and asked Him to receive me; and I know He has forgiven my sins."

The parson was listening with the utmost interest. Was it indeed Nat Youlton who spoke? Truly he was a new man.

"Thank God," he said, "thank God, He has drawn you back to Himself. I cannot tell you how glad I am to hear you speak thus."

And then both fell silent, for when people feel deeply they are not wont to use many words. Little Mary, her hunger satisfied, filled up the pause with her childish chatter. But presently Nat put her off his knee, and she ran out into the sunshine.

"Youlton," said the parson then, "I came to ask you to live a more steady life and attend church regularly, now that you had taken charge of little Mary; but, happily, there's no need to say anything of that now."

"Well, sir, to tell you the truth," replied Nat, "I don't know about attending church. I went last Sunday to the little Methodist chapel up here, the same as I used to go to with my mother when I was a boy, and I must say I like the plain-speaking there; they don't use fine words that one can't understand; they speaks right home to your heart. No offence, sir, but I think I shall feel more at home there than I should at the church.'

The parson was not offended, yet he winced at Nat's words. "Maybe you are right," he returned; "do as you like, of course; but I think you might give me a trial."

Then he went away, and Nat prepared to return to his work.

But such was the effect of the parson's last words that, on the following Sunday morning, Nat, accompanied by little Mary, who looked as neat and clean as the child of any irreproachable mother there, appeared at the parish church, much to the astonishment of Mrs. Rush and some other members of the congregation.

The parson simply talked to his people of our Lord's beautiful parable of the lost sheep. His manner was strangely earnest, and his voice sometimes quivered with emotion. And the simple words coming straight from his heart touched his hearers as none of his formal, carefully-composed sermons had done. "Just persons" were humbled as they listened, and sinners felt the constraint of the Saviour's love.

As for Nat Youlton, he went out of church rejoicing that the Shepherd had found him. As he glanced over the green turf on which the sunshine lay warm, and marked one spot where the sods had recently been upturned, he thought of her whose mortal form had been placed there, and of his mother, and wondered if *they* knew.

He liked to think that they did, and were sharing the joy of the angels over the repentant sinner. And as little Mary laughed and shouted for glee to see the sunshine and the blue sea and the flowers which grew on the cliffs, Nat laughed too, and answered her with words as gay as her own.

But it was no mere mood of gaiety which possessed him, for in his heart was the peace "which passeth understanding."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

MACRAMÉ WORK.—I.

Macramé work, which is a kind of coarse lace formed by twisting and knotting together string, skeins of wool, silk, or even fine strips of leather, is no new invention, but is the revival of an old art, that was known and practised by Eastern nations many centuries ago. The name Macramé, which is applied to the finer and more delicate varieties of the work, not in England only, but also in France, Germany, Italy, and Spain, is Arabic in origin, and appears to have been introduced into Europe about the time of the Crusades. But it is not only among civilised nations that this art finds favour. Some of the most savage tribes of Africa show surprising skill in the making of knotting work, and appreciate its uses for decorative purposes. With it they adorn their arms, their hunting-bags, their aprons, or such slight articles of attire as they can boast of, and they adapt the character of the knotting to the ornament required.

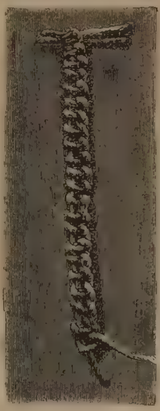


Fig. 1

The foundations of all knotting work are firm immovable knots. The artistic value of the work depends on the pattern formed by the knots, on their relative position to each other, on the arrangement of the connecting cords, and on the suitability of the pattern and material in which it is worked out to the object for which it is designed.

The work is easily learnt, and proficiency in it is soon attained by a little diligent practice.

The following materials are necessary:—(1) A heavy cushion, oblong in form, and furnished with hooks at the ends. A plain board may be substituted for the cushion, and is preferred by many skilled workers. (2) String, thread, wool, silk, or any other material in which the work is to be done. (3) A crochet hook, some large pins and needles. (4) A pair of scissors. (5) A yard measure. It is also convenient to have a little stick at hand, round which the threads can be twisted; the foundation threads, which should be very tightly stretched, can be fixed firmly by its use.

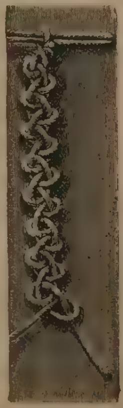


Fig. 2.

The work is begun in this way: The foundation thread, which should always be stronger and thicker than the other threads used, is fixed across the whole length of the cushion from left to right. The hooks are used to keep it in its place; but if there are no hooks, strong pins or even nails may be used. For a narrow edge or simple fringe border, one foundation thread is enough, but for the working out of the more elaborate patterns several are required. They are stretched across the cushion in the same way as the first.

Round these foundation threads the real working or knotting threads are now tied. It is advisable to make these threads at least four times as long as the width of the pattern to be worked, so as to allow for the amount taken up by knotting. They should be equal in length, and doubled together so as to form a loop. This loop is placed under the foundation thread, so as to appear beyond it. It is then bent over the foundation string, and the two ends of the thread are pulled through the loop by a crochet hook. The knot is then pulled up tightly, and in this way the head line of the work is formed.

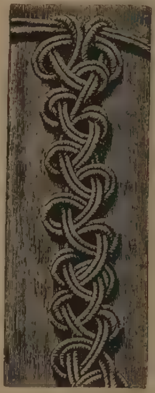


Fig. 3.

In the following directions how to form a few of the knots commonly in use, the string by which the knot is actually made is called the *working string;* the string round which the working string is knotted, or on which the knot is made, is called the *leading string.* A great deal of the beauty of the work depends on the leading string being firmly held in its position, while the working string is knotted round it.

The following are the names usually given to the knots described:—(1) *Button-hole knot;* (2) *Single chain;* (3) *Double chain;* (4) *Flat double knot,* or *Solomon's knot;* (5) *Wave knot;* (6) *Ring chain;* (7) *Ring knot;* (8) *Leaf knot,* or *Ribbed knot;* (9) *Fringe heading.*

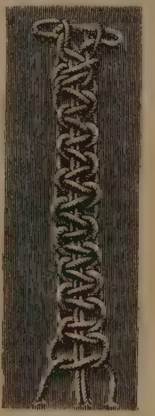


Fig. 4.

To make the button-hole knot (Fig. 1), take the two ends of one of the knotting threads which has been fastened, as described above, to the foundation string. Hold one of the threads, which serves as the leading thread, firmly drawn over the first finger of the left hand. Take the other thread in the right hand; pass it under and round the left forefinger, then across the leading string in the form of X and through the loop so formed. Draw back the forefinger, and draw the knot firmly up, till it is close to the foundation string, then make another in the same way.

The single chain (Fig. 2), or alternating button-hole knot, is, so far as the knotting is concerned, done in the same way as the buttonhole knot, only with this difference, that the left-hand thread is not the one always used as the leading thread. The first knot is made as above, the left thread being held as leading thread by the left hand; the next knot is made by the right thread being held as leading thread by the right hand, and the left-hand thread being used as working thread, and so on alternately.

The double chain (Fig. 3) is rather more difficult, as two threads have to be held in each hand; proceed as for the single chain.

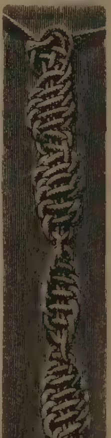
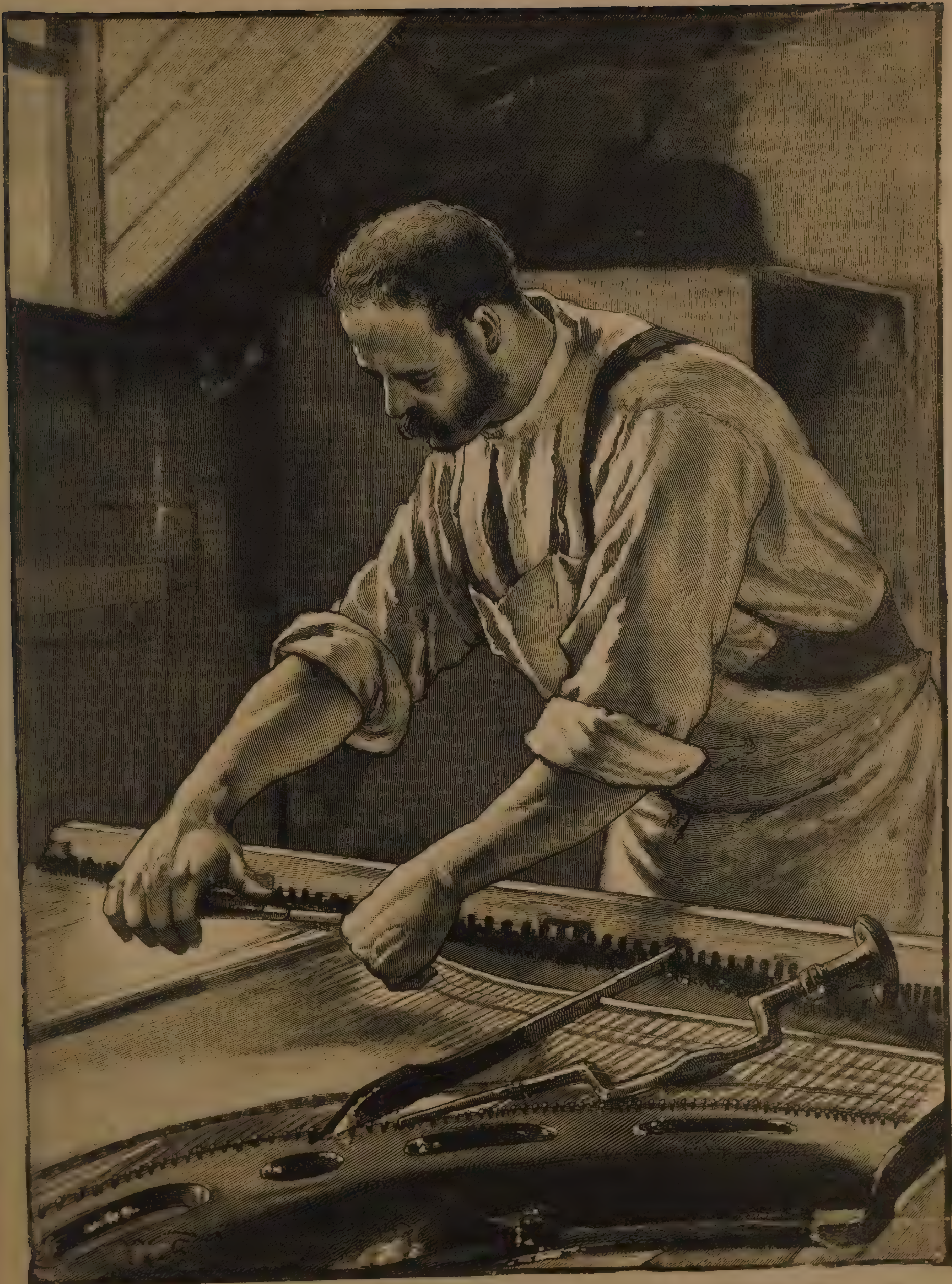


Fig. 5.



[*Drawn by W. S. Stacey.*

PIANOFORTE MAKING—PULLING UP THE STRINGS.

THE PIANOFORTE-MAKER.

The reader must not imagine from the title of our picture that piano-making is a simple trade which can be learnt throughout by any one person—that is to say, learnt practically—but rather that it is a collection of many trades.

In going over a factory such as the one where, by the kindness of Messrs. John Brinsmead & Sons, our drawing was made, one is struck by the great variety of occupation which the making of each instrument involves. Cabinet-makers, French polishers, metal-workers, carvers, sawyers, etc., etc., all have a hand in turning out this most popular source of entertainment and pleasure.

What an amount of care and thought has to be expended on the work! From the selection of the wood, which is the first thing, to the final tuning, which is the last, skill and care, experience and knowledge, as well as taste and judgment, are indispensable.

Our illustration shows the piano in the earliest stage in which it has any *music* in it. It has just been strung, and the man is "pulling up" the strings and adjusting them, and is also, indeed, giving it the first rough tuning. It is interesting to note that the combined strain of all these strings is enormous, amounting to *over twenty tons.*

CONTENTMENT IN LABOUR.

At a time when the labour question is so continually before the public, the thought cannot but suggest itself, how strange it is that so many of us grumble at having to work!

We appear to look upon work as a hardship; some of us even as a degradation. Do we possibly entertain this erroneous view in recollection of work having been imposed upon man after the Fall? and are we utterly unmindful of the fact that God, in His mercy, has endowed us with capabilities both of mind and body, in order that we might use them in His service, and for our own happiness and advantage?

Remarkable it is that when we are children, the very same occupations which at a riper age become distasteful to us interest and amuse us. If, for example, a mother asks her child to fetch a sweeping-brush, and help her to sweep the room or the doorstep, the little girl is quite delighted and proud to be able to help in keeping the house tidy; yet, later on, when she becomes a domestic servant, she thinks it hard indeed that she has to gain her livelihood by the like employment.

Take a little boy whose father may be a carpenter. He often begs hard to be allowed to use the plane and the chisel, yet, when grown up, although well paid for his work, he finds but little pleasure in it,—often, indeed, it becomes quite irksome to him. He hurries over it, frequently not doing it as well as he might, and taking precious good care to leave off as soon as the clock strikes the hour for his release.

We were all meant to work, and to take an interest in so doing. The Creator gave us brains to think with and limbs to make use of, and the neglect of either soon enfeebles them, whilst their active employment strengthens us and prolongs our lives.

With regard to our limbs, in a cold climate like our own, for example, we find it necessary to keep our feet covered and cramped up in shoes, but in hot countries like India the natives either wear no shoes at all, or slip on sandals. Owing to this fact, their feet become strengthened and active, the toes being almost like another set of fingers. We notice them with surprise pick up a piece of wood with a foot instead of a hand, and hold it firmly between their toes, thus gaining a third hand in doing their work.

We often hear the complaint, "We are obliged to work." This is a strange manner of expression, if we but look at it in the right way. We should be thankful, deeply thankful, for being able to labour either mentally or manually, and should take a real interest in whatever duty we may be called upon to perform.

Why should not a shoemaker, for instance, take pleasure in turning out a thoroughly well-finished pair of shoes or boots? In shaping his leather, making the tops or "uppers," fitting it all well on to the last, sewing on the soles, or pegging them together with bright little brads driven in in regular rows? When this is done, is there no interest in putting on the heel, then giving it a final polish, and holding up the pair, being able to say to himself, "I have done all that! My own hands have made it, and my own head has helped me to think it out?" And may not every man or woman employed in trade look upon his or her labour in the same light?

Is it not a pleasant thing to *earn* money, to feel the capability of supporting a wife or children, a mother or a sister, and to be independent of the help or charity of others?

We have heard of a gentleman in good circumstances surprising a carpenter by telling him that he had made all the furniture in his room with his own hands, and the carpenter being so taken aback by his way of putting it before him, that he never after thought of complaining, and enjoyed working from that day forth.

Let a strong man or a woman, however great their dislike for their daily occupation, be suddenly laid low by sickness, and they will tell you a different tale. They will look back with regret upon the days when the hand, now so feeble that it can scarcely lift the bedclothes, was strong and firm, and could wield an axe or carry a heavy basket; they will long, and often in their bitter distress earnestly pray, that the time may soon come when they may once more be enabled to enter upon their daily task.

We are all born to work in some way or other, and we all *do* work, some in a right way, some in a wrong. The indolent man, when time hangs heavily on his hands, is but brooding over the invention of some mistakenly so-called pleasures, which, alas, so frequently turn to vice, and bring upon him and his surroundings both present and future misery. Such a man goes to his grave leaving no traces of good work behind him. The industrious man has no time to think of idle pleasures, and, however unknown to the world, makes happy those about him, and dwells in their loving memory when gone.

If we could but realise that work, as it is called, is but the cultivation of the faculties we possess, and that by cultivating them we are working for God, for our own material welfare, and also for the well-being of those around us, we should certainly do our best to bring this happy condition of things about.

We should train our little ones, from their earliest childhood, to learn to love employment, to help others in their own little way, taking enjoyment in this unselfish toil.

If this were so, when they grew up to be men and women, no complaints of the hardness of labour would vex our ears; we should live lives of sweet contentment and peace, and lift our thoughts in gratitude to Him who never forgets any of His creatures, only asking from them that they shall turn to Him in their need, whatever it may be, and willingly stretching out to them a loving Father's hand.

Mrs. Crewe.

NAT THE QUARRYMAN.

By Eglanton Thorne,

Author of "The Old Worcester Jug," "Nathan Quilter's Fall," etc.

Chapter X.—His Mother's Grave.

It must not be supposed that Nat Youlton found the new path he had begun to tread perfectly smooth and easy to his feet. The way to holiness lies uphill, and its first steps are often very steep.

It was not easy to conquer old habits and boldly to profess himself on the Lord's side; and at first many who should have been prompt to encourage him, looked coldly on him, plainly showing by their manner that they doubted the reality of his change of heart.

But Nat was bold and resolute. His strength of will was on the side of right now, yet it was not in his own strength that he overcame temptation and persevered in the new life. It was because he trusted in the Mighty One, stronger than Satan, stronger than self, stronger than any enemy that might assail him.

Big strong man though he was, ripe in years and experience, though the years, alas, had been wasted, and the experience was of a bitter kind, Nat clung with the simplicity of a child to the Saviour, trusting only in Him to save him.

When his old mates jeered at him, and more sober people regarded him doubtfully, the presence of the happy little child in his home was a great comfort to Nat.

If he returned from his work with his spirit sorely ruffled, ready to despair of ever conquering the difficulties which met him, or of winning the respect of others, the glad welcome with which little Mary hailed his return cheered him wonderfully. She, at least, believed in him. It was pretty to hear her say "Dood Nat," as she stroked his shaggy beard.

Childlike, she lived in the present, and soon ceased to ask when she should see her mother again. She seemed content with Nat's affection, and was never so happy as when with him. And Nat was highly delighted if a stranger, seeing them together, took him to be the father of the pretty little girl.

In Nat's darkest moods—and at first he had times of depression, when he was sorely tempted to break the pledge he had signed in the vicar's study, for though he had not become a slave to drink, he missed the glass to which he had grown accustomed—his heart would gain new hope and faith and courage, when little Mary knelt beside him at bedtime and repeated the lines her mother had taught her as her evening prayer—"Gentle Jesus, meek and mild." For Nat had become as a little child as he entered the kingdom of heaven, and the guileless trustful ways of this child were a continual lesson to him.

When it became evident that Nat Youlton really was a changed man he did not lack evidence of the goodwill of his neighbours. Women could not resist the charms of little Mary, and her motherless condition touched their hearts. They came to the cottage with gifts for her, and sundry offers of service.

One mother would bring a little frock which her youngest child had outgrown, another some socks of her own knitting, and the cobbler's wife brought a pair of neat little shoes which had been a misfit, but which she was sure would do nicely for Mary.

“I wonder you don't marry now, Nat Youlton,” she remarked ere she went away; “there's many a good woman would make you very comfortable, and be a real mother to Mary.”

“Maybe, maybe,” said Nat, calmly; “but I shall never marry. I'll take the best care I can of Mary whilst she's little, and perhaps when she grows up she'll take care of me.”

“She's far more likely to leave you for a husband.”

“Well, then, it must be so,” replied Nat. “I think we shall get along very well for the present with the help of such kind friends as you.”

“You know where to find me if there's anything I can do for the child,” said the woman, pleased by his words; “but really she don't look as if she wanted much.”

And she remarked to the next neighbour she met that Nat was wonderfully clever for a man—he looked after that little maid in a way that might “make some women ashamed of themselves.”

To Nat, who for so long had lived a solitary selfish life, holding as little intercourse as possible with his neighbours, it was a strange thing to receive such tokens of friendly feeling towards him.

But he was grateful for them. His heart, which had been contracting and withering under the blighting influence of sin, now expanded in the warmth of love, divine and human. He was learning to take an interest in other lives, and to cherish those common bonds which bind us to our fellows.

But this and many another lesson was slowly learned, for the new principle of life, implanted in the heart by the Holy Spirit, does not bring its fruit to perfection all at once.

Nat had not forgotten Miss Trotter's wish that he should visit his mother's grave. When she spoke of it he had said to himself that he could not go; but of late, with the great change in his feelings, there had come a strong desire to look upon the spot where she lay.

He resolved that he would take a day's holiday and go to Plymouth ere the winter set in fully. There was more than one home now where he would have been welcome to leave Mary for the day; but he had no idea of going to Plymouth without her, and when he told her he was going to take her out for a day's holiday her delight was beyond bounds.

He was not to be persuaded that the day would be too long for little Mary, that she would grow weary and be a drag upon him. He would be uneasy, and fancy she was unhappy if he left her behind. The child was always good with him, and he had no fear of finding her an encumbrance.

They started very early in the morning, but little Mary was wide awake and full of fun. She enjoyed the drive in a neighbour's trap through the fragrant lanes to the railway station. Nat had wrapped her warmly from the keen air, which made her cheeks glow crimson. The train, too, she found a delightful novelty; but after a while its motion lulled her to rest, and during the greater part of the journey she slept soundly in Nat's arms.

Though not a very long journey it was a tedious one with several changes, so that it was midday ere they arrived at Plymouth.

Having refreshed Mary with a large bun and a glass of milk, after taking which she seemed as lively as ever, Nat proceeded to the address which Miss Trotter had given him.

But here disappointment awaited him, for Miss Trotter was away from home, and was not expected to return till the next day. He was sorry, for he had a great wish to see her. He would have liked to tell her of the happy change that had taken place in his life, for he knew how pleased she would be.

He could have talked to her, but he could not write to her. To such a man as Nat Youlton it is a great effort to write a letter, and one that is rarely attempted.

Turning from the house Nat asked his way to the cemetery. It was a long walk thither, but he carried little Mary most of the way in his arms, and her spirits did not flag.

The cemetery is a large one; and as he surveyed the vast extent strewn with white headstones, Nat felt that it would be almost impossible to find the one he wanted. But, happily, near the gate he chanced to meet a workman who had been employed to erect that very stone. When Nat made inquiries of him he remembered the name at once, and quickly led him to the grave he sought.

It was in a quiet remote part of the great cemetery. As yet few other mounds marked the stretch of greensward. Beyond, outside the boundary of the cemetery, rose a high bank covered with furze bushes in full golden bloom. A weeping birch bent its long yellow boughs over the grave.

But Nat noted nothing till he saw the white headstone. He was only dimly conscious of a woman neatly dressed in black, who moved quickly out of the way as he approached the grave.

“That's the grave you're seeking, I reckon,” said the workman; then, struck by Nat's grave absorbed look, he retired without another word. Nat set down the child he had been carrying in his arms. She looked around her, then, struck by some bright flowers growing on one of the graves, she ran off to examine them more closely.

For once Nat paid no heed to her movements. He stood beside his mother's grave, and the past rose before him with painful vividness, causing a rush of emotion which brought tears to his eyes.

“Mary Youlton.” There was her name and the date of her death, and beneath the simple words—“She was a good mother and a faithful Christian.”

“Absent from the body, present with the Lord.” She had died alone, strangers had buried her; and now for the first time her son stood beside her grave! A wave of bitter self-reproach passed over his heart at the thought.

A sob broke from him as he fell on his knees beside the grave and reverently kissed the green sod. On that sacred spot he pledged himself anew to the God in whom his mother had trusted.

A cry from little Mary startled him. He rose quickly and looked round. The child had strayed to a little distance and had fallen on a newly-gravelled path. He hurried forward, but ere he could reach Mary the woman in black had picked her up and was soothing her with gentle words.

There was blood on the child's knee, and the stranger applied her handkerchief to it; but the cut was not deep, and as the woman talked playfully to her, Mary soon forgot her fright and looked up in her face with a smile.

“Thank you kindly,” said Nat, taking the child from her; “you're used to children, I can see.”

“Yes,” said the woman with a sigh; “I had a little one of my own, just such another as she, once.”

“You had—then you have lost her?”

She bent her head in assent.

“Ah,” said Nat, his tone full of sympathy, “then you've come here, I suppose, to look at her grave?”

“No, not so,” she said, her face growing more sorrowful; “my little one was buried in Australia; but I've come here to see the grave of one who was very near and dear to me.”

“Have you lost your husband too, then?” asked Nat, glancing at her dress.

“I've lost every one that ever belonged to me,” she said bitterly.

“Ah, that is sad,” said Nat.

They walked along together for a few steps in silence. Nat noted the neat respectable appearance of the stranger, and the sorrowful yet patient expression her face wore. Involuntarily he turned his steps towards his mother's grave.

“I've come here to see the place where my mother lies,” he said. “Not that I do not know it is only the worn-out body that lies there. Her spirit is with God her Saviour, which is much better than being here on earth, the Bible tells us. See, that is her grave!”

He was too intent on it himself to observe the start the woman gave as her eyes fell on it. Her face grew very white, her hands were nervously clasped together, her lips trembled, and she could say nothing.

But Nat noted no sign of agitation, nor did he seem to expect any response from her.

“She was a good mother,” he said, “but I was a bad son to her. It grieves me to think of it now. I'd give anything to have her back for a little while, that I might show her how sorry I am.”

“Yes, yes,” said the woman tremulously, “I can understand that.”

“But she's better off where she is,” continued Nat; “she's with the Lord, as the stone says—I know that.”

“Were you her only child?” the stranger asked, in tones that were far from steady. “Had you no brother, or—or sister?”

A shadow fell upon Nat's face at the question—the shadow which always came there if any one mentioned his sister.

“No, no,” he said hastily; “at least, I had a sister; but she's gone.”

“You have lost her?”

“Yes, I've lost her.”

“Ah. Good-day to you;” and the stranger turned abruptly away. Nat looked after her in surprise. Poor woman! she seemed broken down with sorrow. There was something in her appearance that was familiar to him, yet he could not remember that he had ever seen her before.

He turned his gaze again upon the white headstone and there was a heavier burden now upon his heart, for he had been reminded of another Mary Youlton, of whom he never liked to think.

He looked at his watch—it was time to be moving away. A train left Plymouth about five o'clock, by which he meant to return home. So, calling little Mary, he turned his steps towards the gate.

The woman had passed out of sight in another direction; but after he had gone she came back to the grave which bore the name of Mary Youlton, and wept long and bitterly as she knelt beside it.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

MACRAMÉ WORK

Second Paper.

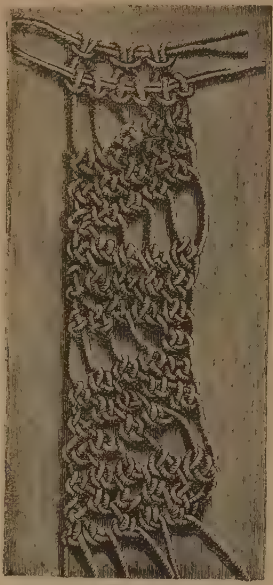


Fig. 9.

The construction of the flat double knot (Fig. 4), or Solomon's knot, is rather more complicated. Four threads are required for it, of which the two middle ones are used as leading threads and must always be kept straight. Take these two threads in the left hand, and hold them firmly between the thumb and first finger; then take the right working thread with the right hand, bend it so as to form a loop, and turn it in a horizontal direction over the leading threads to the left; hold it with the thumb of the left hand. Take the left working thread with the right hand, pass it over the left thumb, under the leading threads, and through the loop formed by the right-hand working thread. Draw the ends of both right and left working threads to pull the knot together, and push it up to the foundation string. This forms the first part, or stitch, of the knot. To form the second part proceed in the same way, only reverse the direction. That is to say, hold the leading threads in the right hand and work with the left hand, beginning with the left working thread and finishing with the right. Pull the threads tightly as before, and push up the knot. Then go on to form other knots, taking care always to complete the knot by working the second stitch after the first.

To form the wave knot (Fig. 5), work the first stitch of the flat double knot (Fig. 4) four or more times in succession; then work the second stitch four or more times, and so on, alternately. The wave effect is increased by working a greater number of each stitch. This wave knot is often used to form a fringe, as it is very durable and does not tangle easily.

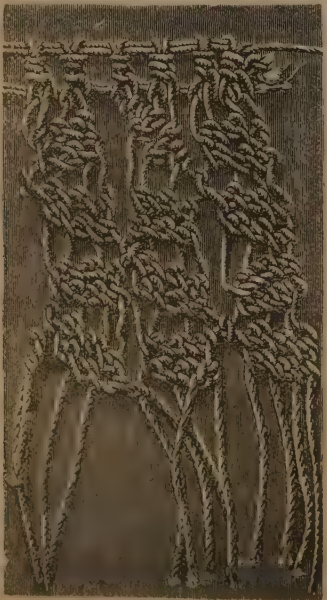


Fig. 10.

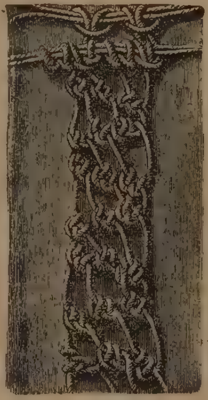


Fig. 8.

Ring Chain (Fig. 6).—For this pattern four threads are required, attached as before to the foundation string; the two middle threads are to be used as leading threads. Separate the threads, two and two, by two pins placed a little distance apart. Make five or six buttonhole knots with the two left-hand threads, taking care always to keep that thread which is nearest the middle as leading thread. Make the same number of buttonhole knots with the two right-hand threads, again taking care that the leading thread is that nearest the middle. Then unite the two strands of the work by taking the two leading threads and making two buttonhole knots with them, using the right hand one as the leading thread. This completes the pattern. Begin again as before, placing the pins to keep the strands apart, but when joining the strands use the left-hand leading thread as leading thread instead of the right.

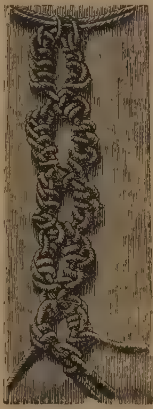


Fig. 6.

The leaf or ribbed knot (Figs. 8, 9, 10) can be made either single, double, or threefold, and is most effective when worked in string or strong knotting silk. It is desirable to have two foundation strings, and the second must be firmly fixed at an equal distance from the first. The working threads are looped twice round the second foundation string as shown in Fig. 8, and this forms a strong bar that stands out prominently.

The thread at the left-hand side of the work serves as leading string in the working out of the whole pattern, and is used in the following way:—

Take it in the right hand and bend it in a slanting direction over the other threads. Take each of the working threads in succession, beginning at the left, and make with each of them two buttonhole knots over the leading thread. In this way a slanting line of knots is formed. Place a pin at the right side of the work, and pass the leading thread round it. Now take the leading thread in the left hand, bend it in a slanting direction from right to left, and knot the other threads into it with two buttonhole knots as before, beginning at the right. Turn the leading thread again round a pin at the left of the work, and proceed as before.

The name of *leaf* is given to this knot because three or more rows slanting in the same direction can be made one after another, so as to give the appearance of a leaf, which cannot be produced by any other form of knotting.

In order to make the pattern shown in Fig. 9 six threads are used and the knots made as described above. The shell pattern (Fig. 10) is also made with the same knot, but twelve threads are used in three groups of four in each.

The *knotted fringe* (Fig. 11), which can be made in many different widths and different patterns, requires strong foundation strings on which the threads are knotted as described in Fig. 8. The pattern shown in the illustration is formed by the flat double knot or Solomon's knot, only the knots are kept well apart so as to form loose open work. It is well to use pins in order to keep the distances equal between the knots, and a little study of the illustration will show how the rows are changed. In finishing off the fringe, the purpose for which it is to be used must be considered. The strings may be left hanging loose, they may be carefully untwisted and combed out, or they may be knotted as in Fig 5.

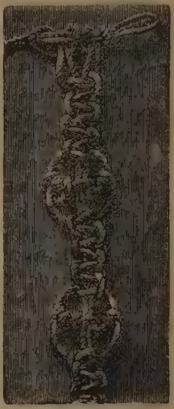


Fig. 7.

In conclusion, it may be remarked that the effectiveness of Macramé work is greatly increased by the use of coloured materials, and by mounting the work on a coloured lining, which shows the pattern to advantage, and gives an appearance of lightness to it.

The uses to which it may be applied, and the forms it may assume are endless. It may be made a mere border, or to cover a large surface; it may serve as lace edging, as insertion, or as fringe. The finer qualities form handsome trimmings for mantles or dresses; the coarse bolder kinds are very effective as trimming for furniture and upholstery work.

A. H.

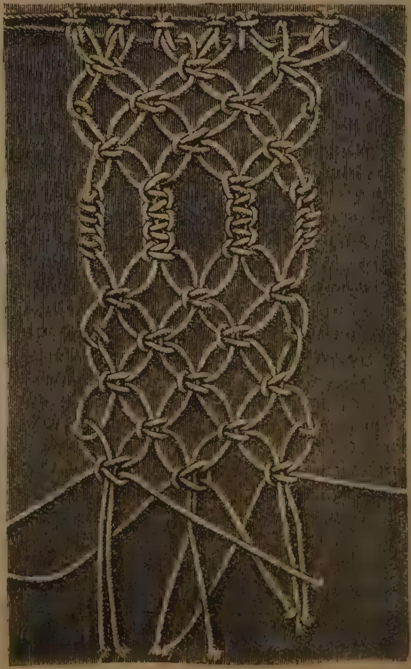


Fig. 11.

JOSEPH ROUND, THE COLLIER.

All around were benches cut out of the solid coal, and at one end was a pulpit also cut out of the coal.

Joseph Round was a native of Dudley, and at the age of twelve years was sent to work in a coal-pit, where he soon imitated the vices of persons older and more wicked than himself.

As he grew up he became awfully profane, and was so notoriously addicted to cursing and swearing, that when told by the manager, on a particular occasion, to drive the horses employed about the pit's mouth, one of his companions cried out, "Oh, don't send Round, for he will curse and swear all the way."

When about the age of sixteen, one of Joseph's relatives prevailed upon him to go and hear a minister of the Gospel. The text was announced, and it fell like thunder upon his ear, while it revealed to him, with terror, the danger of his condition:—"The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."

The power of the Holy Spirit sent these words like an arrow to his heart. He heard his sins declared, and his doom denounced. He saw for the first time what a wicked life he had been leading, and that his whole course had been rebellion against God. He went away a convinced and trembling sinner, and with the deep anxiety expressed in the Philippian jailer's question, "What must I do to be saved?"

Finding little opportunity for prayer and reflection at home, Joseph walked into the fields, and falling upon his knees, sent up a cry to heaven for mercy to pardon the guilt, and for grace to subdue the power, of his besetting sin.

He who is nigh to all that call upon Him, heard and immediately answered his supplication. Various passages of Scripture came vividly to his recollection, especially our Lord's words to the woman who had been a sinner, "Go in peace; thy faith hath saved thee; thy sins are forgiven thee." He was then enabled to "behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Having now really believed in Christ, Joseph went on his way rejoicing. From that time his faith worked by love, and proved its genuineness by the good works which it produced.

Swearing was exchanged for praying and praising; Sabbath-breaking for a right observance of God's holy day; and neglect of the house of God, for a regular attendance upon religious ordinances. He became a new creature in Christ Jesus; old things had passed away, and all things had become new.

He was very anxious about his fellow-colliers, and persuaded them to listen to his addresses in the place of their daily labour.

I went to see where he was at work. I stood upon the bank of the pit, and, prompted by curiosity, I made up my mind to descend the shaft. On reaching the bottom, I was conducted into a large apartment cut out of the coal.

All around this place were benches cut out of the solid coal. At one end was a pulpit, also cut out of the solid coal; and in the centre and front of the pulpit was a missionary box cut out of the coal; and having engraved upon it the words "Missionary Box." The steps to the pulpit were cut out of the coal. All around were pegs driven into the coal, on which the men hung their hats. In the centre of the little chapel was stuck a large thorn bush, on which the candles were hung when the service was being held. Here Joseph Round used to gather his fellow-labourers, and point them to the cross of Christ.

And as I looked round, and felt the solemnities of the place, I could not but exclaim, "This is none other than the house of God, and the very gate of heaven."

About six months before his death, as he was at his work in the pit, a considerable fall of coal took place, which much injured him; of which he gave the following account in a letter to a friend:

"DEAR FRIEND,—May the great Head of the Church bless and save you to the end! I have met with another accident by the coal falling. I am cut and bruised from my shoulder to the hip. The doctor thinks my shoulder is broken, but he cannot tell. I feel much pain across the chest; but the Lord is with me. I can't tell when I shall see you again. Pray for me, and I will pray for you. I desire the prayers of all God's people."

On the morning of the day he died, he said, "I feel as I never felt before." "Do you know you are dying?" said his wife. "Yes," he calmly replied, "I do know;" and having uttered his last wish and prayer in words so often repeated by waiting dying saints, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly," this poor but holy collier departed, in the fifty-first year of his age, to be with Him whom his soul loved.

◆

THE LAST TORN LEAF.

A FATHER in South Carolina was about sending his son to college. Fearing lest the principles of Christian faith, which he had endeavoured to instil into his mind would be rudely assailed, but trusting in the efficacy of that word which is quick and powerful, he purchased, unknown to his son, an elegant copy of the Bible, and deposited it at the bottom of his trunk.

The young man entered upon his college career. The restraints of a pious education were soon broken off, and he proceeded from speculation to doubts, and from doubts to a denial of the reality of religion.

After having become, in his own estimation, wiser than his father, he discovered one day, while rummaging his trunk, with great surprise and indignation, the sacred deposit. He took it out, and while deliberating on the manner in which he should treat it, he determined that he would use it, as he should need it, to wipe his razor on while shaving.

Accordingly, whenever he went to shave, he tore out a leaf or two of the Holy Book, and thus used it till nearly half the volume was destroyed. But while he was committing this outrage, a text now and then met his eye, and was carried like a barbed arrow to his heart.

At length he heard a sermon which discovered to him his own character and his exposure to the wrath of God, and riveted upon his mind the impression which he had received from the last torn leaf of the blessed yet insulted volume. He would freely have given all he had could it have availed him to undo what he had done.

At length he found forgiveness at the foot of the cross. The torn leaves of that sacred volume brought healing to his soul, for they led him to repose on the mercy of God in Christ, which is sufficient for the chief of sinners.

LULLING TO SLEEP.

An old lady, who had become deaf and nearly blind, once said to Mary Barton:

"You're mourning for me, my dear, and there's no need. I am as happy as a child. I sometimes think I am a child whom the Lord is hushabying to my long sleep.

"For when I was a nurse-girl, my missus always telled me to speak very low and soft, and to darken the room, that her little one might go to sleep. Now to me all noises are hushed and still, and the bonnie earth seems dim and dark, and I know it is my Father lulling me to my long sleep."

As the bird in the darkened cage sings merrily, so chastened, humble souls are filled with "the peace of God that passeth understanding."

GOD'S HELP.

Human love may change. The friendship of last year has grown cold. The gentleness of yesterday has turned to severity.

But it is never thus with God's love. It is eternal. Our lives may change; our consciousness of His love may fade out; but the love clings for ever; the gentleness of God abides eternal.

"For the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed; but My kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of My peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee."

There is never a moment, nor any experience, in the life of a true Christian, from the heart of which a message may not instantly be sent up to God, and receive a gracious answer.

God is not off in some remote heaven merely. He is not away at the top of the long steep life-ladder, looking down upon us in serene calm, and watching us as we struggle upward in pain and tears.

He is with each one of us on every part of the way. His promise of presence is an eternal present tense: "I *am* with thee."

So "Thou, God, seest me" becomes to the believer a most cheering and inspiring assurance. We are never out of God's sight for a moment. His eye watches each one of us continually, and His heart is in His eye. He comes instantly to our help and deliverance when we are in any need of danger.

A RIVER TO CROSS.

There's always a river to cross,
  Always an effort to make,
If there is anything good to win,
  Any rich prize to take.
Yonder's the fruit we crave,
  Yonder the charming scene;
But deep and wide, with a troubled tide,
  Is the river that lies between.

For the treasures of precious worth
  We must patiently dig and dive;
For the place we long to fill
  We must push and struggle and strive;
And always and everywhere
  We'll find in our onward course
Thorns for the feet and trials to meet,
  And a difficult river to cross.

For the rougher the way we take,
  The stouter the heart and the nerve;
The stones in our path we break,
  Nor e'er from our impulse swerve;
For the glory we hope to win
  Our labour we count no loss;
'Tis folly to pause and murmur because
  Of the river we have to cross.

So ready to do and to dare,
  Should we in our places stand,
Fulfilling the Master's will,
  Fulfilling the soul's demand;
For though as the mountains high
  The billows may war and toss,
They'll not overwhelm if God's at the helm,
  When the difficult river we cross.

Josephine Pollard.

W. H. STERNDALE. DE.

THE BLIND DANCER.

"OAHU's idols are no more!" These were the first words heard by the missionaries who were sent out to the Sandwich Islands in 1819.

They had gone out resolved to do their best to destroy idolatry. And before they had set foot on the land, the tidings met them that the great king was dead; that Liho Liho had abolished the heathen customs and burnt the idols.

Strange to say, the foremost in giving cordial welcome to the newcomers was Heva-Heva, late high-priest of the god of war. It was he who counselled the king to destroy the idols, telling him that wooden images, carved by their own hands, could never make the yams to grow, nor send rain, nor bestow life or health.

He added: "My thought has always been there is only one Great God dwelling in the heavens." So now, when the servants of the One God arrived, he threw his whole weight into their scale.

Amongst those to whom the good tidings came home with intense reality was Puaaiki, a wretched blind dancer. His blindness was partly due to the excessive use of intoxicating drinks, and his life had been as disreputable as it well could be.

He was chiefly noted for his skill in the performance of the *hula-hula*, a combination of objectionable songs and dances. For this reason he was retained for the amusement of the queen and chiefs, and earned a scanty living by playing the buffoon in their presence.

As a court-follower, he accompanied the king to Honolulu, where he fell ill. Neglected and miserable, he lay alone, and the deep darkness that had blinded his eyes lay heavy on his soul. In his hour of distress he was found by Honolii, one of the Hawaiian lads educated in America, who comforted him, and spoke of the Great Physician who had given sight to the blind. These words were as a message of life to the poor blind buffoon. He induced a heathen lad to lead him day after day to the place where the Christian teachers spoke to the people, and he eagerly drank in every word.

Those who observed him saw only a picture of extreme degradation and wretchedness—a small frail figure, bowed down by sickness; with long black beard, and a scanty strip of bark cloth as his only dress. But his sightless eyes seemed to save him from distraction: he gave undivided attention to all he heard. His wonderful memory seemed to grasp and to retain everything.

When next the chiefs sent for him to dance before them, he refused, saying that henceforth he must live as beseemed a servant of the living God. Some derided him; but the queen respected his courage, and herself gave ear to the words of the poor blind dancer, who now besought her to seek the way of salvation.

It was not till the beginning of his last year on earth that Batimea (*Bartimæus*—the name chosen by the blind man at his baptism) was ordained as an evangelist.

Besides visiting ceaselessly from house to house, he had constantly to journey to and fro on foot between two villages twenty miles apart. So the flesh succumbed; and the good servant, whose promotion on earth had been so slow, was called to serve in the very presence of the Master.

He was noted to the last for the touching humility which ever took the lowest place, and shrank from every word of praise. The very fact of his blindness lent a deeper pathos to his earnest pleadings with his unseen hearers.

THE STORM-TIDE.

This is a terrible word to the Dutch fishermen and their wives who live on the North Sea coasts. To spring-tides and high tides they are accustomed twice every month; but to a storm-tide—that is, a high spring-tide with a north-west wind raging furiously—they can never be reconciled.

The women are thinking of their husbands at sea.

The wind prevents the waves from retreating, and they come rolling in like great mountains, wave upon wave, striking terror into the hearts of the poor Friesland women who sit at their windows watching the cruel sea.

It is a grand and fascinating sight, but the women know their husbands are out at sea, and know, too, that in that very Dollart, or bay, in which their boats are probably now tossing, formerly stood the town of Torum, two other market towns, and about fifty villages, all of which have fallen victims to the storm-tide.

Who shall say whether their own houses, and indeed the whole town, shall not be the next to be swallowed up in the yawning waves which threaten them as they come crashing in, sending their white foam high up into the air, far over the dykes set to mark their limits? None can say: only He who has set the waves their bounds which they shall not pass can tell. All human comfort fails in the face of such danger as this.

Man has done his best; as the fish-wives know, the dykes have been built as well as it was possible for man to build them. But the storm-tide is a terrible enemy; they dare not trust to their dykes, but look higher, far higher, even as high as heaven, for help in such a crisis.

In the picture we see a mother and daughter looking anxiously out, while the north-west wind is raging; it is a spring-tide, and, as they know, the danger is very great. Hausfru Decken realises it more than her daughter, for she has seen the terrible havoc the storm-tide works, and she fears more for her home than for her husband at sea.

But Elsbeth is thinking of one dearer even than her father—of her lover, who has told her never to fear for him. She does fear, nevertheless, but she is young and hopeful, and she does her best to keep up her mother's spirits; she, too, knows all human help is vain, so she has fetched her Bible, and from time to time has read a few verses from the Psalms in the grand German version which seems to suit them so well; there are many which will bring comfort to these poor anxious women.

"They go up as high as the hills, and down to the valleys beneath; even unto the place which Thou hast appointed for them.

"Thou hast set them their bounds which they shall not pass; neither turn again to cover the earth."

And again—

"So when they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, He delivereth them out of their distress.

"For He maketh the storm to cease, so that the waves thereof are still.

"Then are they glad because they are at rest, and He bringeth them unto the haven where they would be."

These and many other verses did Elsbeth read to her mother as the storm raged furiously, the tower-like waves rolling majestically in, apparently on destruction bent; while little Gretchen sat frightened on her mother's knee and asked piteously from time to time whe father was coming home. When father was there Gretchen knew no fear.

“We should be like Gretchen, mother—she is never afraid when father is here; our Father is with us, He will take care of us, I am sure, and of father and Karl too,” said Elsbeth.

“I hope so, Elsbeth, I trust so; but oh! how I wish the wind would drop,” said Hausfru Decken, anxiously.

So did Elsbeth, for, though not so alarmed as her mother, she knew the danger was great; moreover, unless the wind fell soon, Karl and her father would have to stay out perhaps all night, for the sun was already low in the horizon, and the sea would take some time to quiet down enough to enable them to land after such a storm.

But before the sun had set the wind fell, and for that time the danger was over. We may be sure there went up a hymn of praise from the two women who had suffered such suspense and anxiety; and when, later on, Hans Decken returned with the news that Karl was safe, they all slept as soundly as if no such thing as a storm-tide had ever troubled them.

Happy those who live in a land where such a danger as that which threatens the Friesland peasants at every storm-tide is unknown!

F. S.

NO THOUGHT FOR THE MORROW.

In one of those sweet Devonshire villages which nestle among apple-orchards and green slopes, you might have found two cottages standing a little apart from the rest. The road, which came down a steep hill, went right through the little village and along by the side of the stream before it began to ascend again. The first of my two cottages stood at the bottom of this incline, the other a hundred yards or so further up and on the opposite side.

Each had enough space in front for a little garden. Each had a thatched roof and a wooden porch over the door.

But there all similarity ended. For one was neat and trim and beautiful with its white-washed walls and overhanging eaves, and rose and honeysuckle covered porch. Its little garden was gay with flowers—stocks, geraniums, and lilies, and many another old-fashioned blossom. Its open door showed a glimpse of an interior in keeping with the rest.

Inside you would not have found a speck of dirt. The pots of musk on the window-sill were shut in by spotless muslin curtains, and the old-fashioned brass candlesticks on the mantel-shelf, touched by the sunbeams which came through, showed a flawless polish. The old clock in the corner had ticked away many a peaceful hour there while children had been born and had grown up, and gone forth in their turn to work and live God-fearing lives as their parents had done.

The other cottage was a sad contrast. What should have been the garden was a mere wilderness of weeds and nettles. The wood-work of the porch was broken, the once-white walls dirty and damp, and the thatch unmended and falling fast to decay. Inside, the stone floor was rough, uneven, and dirty. A few bare sticks of furniture answered all necessities, and poverty and want were made evident in everything.

Now these were the homes of two men who had settled in that village about the same time. They both came bringing with them young wives, and took possession of the two cottages, then newly built. Both were hired as labourers on a farm just over the hill, which had been recently purchased by a wealthy yeoman, and both started under the same auspices to work for daily bread.

That was twenty years ago. The men were still little over middle age; but while James Pearse was hale and happy and hearty, blessed with children who had grown up to the same inheritance, John Fry was a miserable dogged specimen of manhood, with a home which in no sense deserved the name, a sickly wife, and a large family of children whom he could not support.

And what was the reason of this great difference? Some people said that bad luck had followed John Fry, and that good fortune had blessed James Pearse in everything. That was an easy way of explaining it, at any rate, but not a satisfactory one, for these people never could tell why it had been so.

There were others who would declare that the will of God was to chastise some of His children and to bless others, and that He had seen good to afflict the family of John Fry with sickness and poverty.

But the village doctor had a different theory. He was a good, kind, energetic man, knowing each villager personally, and taking a personal interest in all their concerns.

“Those are two men,” he said, “who have acted on the command to take *no thought for the morrow.*”

“Yes,” he went on, after a pause, “you look surprised; but that is the key-note of each life, and the reason of their present condition. James Pearse has taken our Lord's words in their right sense, and John Fry has put his own interpretation upon them.”

“And what was that?” I asked.

“I remember, many years ago,” said the doctor, “when his first baby was born and his wife was very ill, I told him to get some one to nurse them both, as the child was weak and sickly too. But so long as neighbours would come in and do what was necessary he was content. When his wife was out of danger I again spoke to him seriously of the injudicious treatment of the infant by one of the women, who, meaning well, knew nothing.

He answered that the brat would do all right, like any other. I urged that the child was not quite like others, and that want of care now might make all the difference in its after life. But I spoke in vain.

The mother was ailing for many weeks. One day the child rolled off the bed and injured its head and back so that for the ten years it lived it was a deformed and helpless idiot. Others followed in quick succession. The mother was always ailing, the house became more and more neglected, and John Fry began to frequent the public-house.

He was never a drunkard, but he was occasionally the worse for liquor. He became morose and bad-tempered, disliked by his fellow-labourers, and not favoured by his master, who kept a keen eye over all he employed. And so things went on from bad to worse till two of the children were laid down with diphtheria. On inquiry I found that they had been drinking and using water from a pond just behind the cottage, instead of going to the village well for it.

‘Have you no sense, man?’ said I to John Fry; ‘don't you know that such water as that stagnant pond may contain what is deadly and poisonous? Here are two of your children at death's door from drinking it.’

‘But,’ he answered sullenly, ‘the water has done well enough until now. If the brats are to be bad they 'll *be* bad, spite of water or wells.’

‘Do not talk so,’ I said. ‘Do you expect miracles? If you won't take the trouble to avoid certain evil, do you expect to escape the consequences of your folly?’

‘What does parson say?’ retorted the man with a sneer—‘“Take no thought for the morrow.” You 're goin' a bit agin him.’

‘And what do those words mean?’ said I. ‘Listen to me, John Fry. When our Lord said, “Take no thought for the morrow,” He said too, “for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself.” Why must you take no thought for the morrow? Simply because all your thought must be spent on to-day. It is the present only that is yours.

‘It takes all your wisdom and your strength and your labour to live to-day aright, and *that* is why you are not to think of to-morrow. When to-morrow becomes to-day, what you have done will help you in what you have to do.

‘And you call yourself “unlucky. Begin now, late as it is, to take no thought for the morrow, because all your thoughts are centred on to-day, and then you will see why misfortune has been with you!’”

“What did he say to that?” I asked.

“Not much. Three of his children died within as many weeks. They, at least were taken from suffering. There are four alive now. His wife, poor soul, is dead, and a daughter keeps house for him. The second daughter is dying of consumption by inches. A third makes money by dress-making.

But John Fry himself spends most of his time in the public-house. He is fond of his children in his way—especially of the one who is so ill. But the habits of former years hold him in their chains. A sad story!”

“And the other—James Pearse?”

“Ah,” said the doctor, his face lighting up, “he is the best man in the village. He not only does his own work well, but he is always ready and willing to do a good turn to others. His two children, son and daughter, are in my employ. The girl is an invaluable maid, trained as she has been in habits of neatness and industry; the boy does all my garden work, and will, in time, get into a first-rate place as gardener.

Many a time I go into their cottage for a chat. James Pearse is no mean authority on many subjects, for he has read a great deal. He and his wife are perfectly happy with their flowers and their bees. That is a man whose whole life has been a to-day. He has worked, lived, and prayed with all his heart, and done his best with every moment. Therefore, he has understood the full meaning of our Lord's command to take no thought for the morrow, and he knows, too, why the morrow takes thought for the things of itself.”

E. D.

TINKER, TAILOR, AND THE REST OF THEM; OR,

MRS. WATSON'S SEVEN LODGERS.

No. VI.—PLOUGHBOY.

THERE came a time in our married life when Jacob he had a bad attack of the chest, and the doctor says to me, he says, "Mrs. Watson, if ever your husband is to get strong again, you must take him away," says he, "right away into the country; somewhere where there 's plenty of fresh air and pure milk, and no smoke nor grime nor dust to breathe. For," says the doctor, with a graver face than I liked, "Watson's lungs are so delicate now, that a little more of this town life may set up disease which cannot be cured."

Well, in course, such words as these was more 'n enough for me. I 'd saved money, and could afford to move. So I lets our house furnished, packs up our things, and away we goes to a lovely little place called Breezy Downs, a hundred good miles from London.

The cottage we took was a good-sized one; and to help us pay the rent I thought we 'd let a part; and so I puts the ticket in the winder as soon as we was settled and in order. It hadn't been up a week afore a man called to see the apartments, and after a bit of a talk we came to terms, and he took the two rooms—one front and one back on the first floor—for hisself and his two boys, he bein' a widower.

But he hadn't been with us long afore me and Jacob see plain enough that this lodger of ours had a screw loose somewheres. I don't mean as how he hadn't all his senses, no; nor he wasn't a bad-hearted man, neither cross nor sly, but he was weak and foolish, and a bit inclined to be idle; and then he had a big longin' to be rich without too much labour; and it seemed as if he never had a moment or a thought to spare for good things.

It didn't seem to come into his head that he had a soul at all, nor yet that his chil'en was a trust from the Lord, to be trained for holy useful lives on earth and in heaven. His thoughts was all of the earth, earthly, and never got no higher.

His work was reg'lar, for he was second man on the Squire's farm, his wages bein' twenty-five shillin's a week, with leave to bring home a pint of milk a day, and vegetables that growed in the big kitchen garden at the back of the farm.

Takin' one thing with another, Alfred Saunderson and his boys had oughter be very comfortable, and puttin' away a little every week beside. And yet the rent wasn't always forthcoming, the lads' school-payments was continual gettin' behind, bills was run up at the butcher's and baker's, and there wasn't a penny piece laid by for clothes or boots.

In course, me and my Jacob wondered where all the money went to, but we didn't wonder very long. A queer sort of chap had took the village inn only six months afore; a chap as wasn't at all the usual sort of country publican, for he was neither rough and fiery like the bad spirit they sells, nor yet thick and muddy in his head like their own beer. But this was a sharp, spruce, town-bred feller, with a clean knowin' face, clean shaven, a sly eye, a flatterin' sort of manner, and a tongue *that* coaxin' as would have wheedled a bird off a bough.

What in the world he came for, to this humdrum, quiet, out-of-the-way place, no one knowed; but he called hisself Walter Crane, and his manners was such, that very soon Walter Crane was a favourite with most of the men—or, leastways, with them as was in the habit of drinkin' at the bar of the "Black Sheep," as the inn was called.

For the rest, the "Black Sheep" appeared to be a quiet place enough. The bar closed at ten, and there wasn't no noise nor quarrellin' to be heard there nights. But a whisper got about somehow that after the inn was said to be shut up, some of the men met upstairs in a big room, and had some sort of a club meetin', and drinkin' and gamin' till late.

Sure it was that our lodger used often to come home at one and two in the mornin', and go to bed on the quiet. Likewise, he were awful hard to rouse of a mornin', sleepin' like a dead thing, with Jacob a-thunderin' at his door with both fists.

Alfred Saunderson never went to no place of worship, though there was the Parish Church and a Congregational Chapel, both in the village. And, in course, since he didn't go, neither did the boys. And when I tried to persuade the chil'en, they always said, "Dad don't go, so why should we?"

So it came to pass that, save for such care as I could give 'em, them lads just run wild, playin' truant from school, trespassin' in people's plantations, robbin' orchards, birds'-nestin', rabbit-snarin', and what not; two wild young lads they was as ever were seen.

Their father, he took no notice and said nothin' to 'em. His mind always seemed so full of his own affairs that it hadn't no room for care about his chil'en.

One day Mr. Bailey, a farmer, called to see Saunderson, and him bein' out, the man tell me what he came for.

"I hired them two boys of Alfred Saunderson's," says he—"this bein' holiday time—to be my ploughboys and helpers for a week or two, while my men was busy. Well, yesterday, I set 'em to scare the birds away from a field, and they said they 'd do it faithful.

"But not feelin' quite sure of 'em, I goes down there in the afternoon, and, if you 'll believe it, Mrs. Watson, them two idle fellers, gettin' tired of their work, had gone and rigged up a scarecrow out of a branch and some of their own clothes, and left the field to take care of itself; so that when I came, the whole place was a-swarmin' with birds, they bein' so used to them scarecrows as not to mind 'em a little bit.

"And now, Mrs. Watson," says the farmer, concludin', "I want you to tell Alfred Saunderson this, and say that them boys of his has caused me damage; and the least he can do is to make it good to me."

Well, I shakes my head, and, says I, "I 'll tell him if you like, Mr. Bailey, but I don't think it 'll be of any manner of use. My lodger never has no cash to spare." And at that Mr. Bailey he makes a face, and shakes his great shoulders, and takes hisself off, not best pleased.

But as the weeks went on, hardly a day passed but them boys was up to some mischief. And still their father took no notice, but spent more and more of his time at the "Black Sheep," gettin' more and more hand and glove with Walter Crane, who, Alfred Saunderson said, was a very superior sort of a man, and so kind, that for them as was his reg'lar customers he 'd go out of his way to oblige 'em, and give 'em the advantage of all the knowledge of business as he got in London.

"I tell you, Mrs. Watson," said my lodger to me one night, "my friend Crane has been and established a club-fund now, and everything we pay into it will be doubled soon, he havin' such a many chances for doin' business that he can turn over the money quick, and safe, and profitable. And I take it very kind of him that he does it all so disinterested, he makin' next to nothin' for hisself."

"Are you quite sure the man 's all you say, Mr. Saunderson?" says I. "Ain't you p'raps puttin' too much trust in him? Remember, nothin' wasn't knowed of him afore he took this place a few months agone, and while you 're confidin' your money to him, your boys is runnin' about almost without clothes to their backs or shoes to their feet, or proper food to eat. I don't want to meddle with my lodgers," says I, "but me and Jacob is both troubled at things bein' as they are."

"Then you and Jacob had best mind your own business, I think," says Saunderson; and I never said nothin' more to him.

But soon after this somethin' happened; leastways, two somethin's, as happened the same evenin'.

The first of 'em was this. Harry Saunderson, the elder boy, was prowlin' and poachin', as I 'm afeared he often done, when he got his foot fast in a steel trap, and lay there, in the rain, till he took a bad chill afore he were found. When they got him home he was in a high fever.

I put the boy to bed (his father was out as usual), gave him some cool drink, bound up his foot and leg with cold-water bandages, and tied a wet towel round his head; and then Jacob he walked off for the doctor.

Afore he came back (it bein' a five mile walk, and mostly up hill) Alfred Saunderson got home, and the poor feller were in such a takin' when he found his son Harry was ill. I didn't know he cared so much for his children till I see him so worried and sad about this boy.

"I shall want money for the doctor, and medicine, and good food for Harry," says he to me; "and as I 've only just kept a little for rent and to live on next week (this being Saturday), havin' paid the rest of my wages into the club-fund this very evenin', I 'll go up to the 'Black Sheep' directly, Mrs. Watson, and get Crane to give me five pounds of the lot that I 've paid in since the fund was opened."

"Yes, do, Mr. Saunderson," says I, feelin' that anything he could get back from there would be a good thing indeed.

Away goes my lodger, but comes home in a few minutes.

"Crane 's engaged—very partic'lar, just now," says he, "and so he couldn't give me the money. But he 's agoin' to bring it round, he says, last thing, as soon as the 'Black Sheep' closes for the night. So sorry Crane was to hear of my poor Harry's accident! Ah! what a kind heart the

They rigged up a scarecrow out of a branch and some of their clothes.

man has to be sure, and such a interest as he takes too in us all, though we 're so far below the company he 's been used to when he lived in London !"

Well, Saunderson sat by the sick boy, and Jacob and the doctor they came in together; and then there was supper to see to, and broth and gruel to make, and I was kept busy till quite late; but still Walter Crane didn't come, nor yet send the money, and Alfred Saunderson kept on wonderin' why he didn't.

At last there came a knock at the door. "There 's Crane," says our lodger, "I knew he wouldn't fail us."

But it wasn't Crane at all, but only Jerry Graves, a neighbour as lived a few doors off; and says Jerry with a scared look in his face, says he, "Bad news, Mrs. Watson; couldn't be wuss news," says he, "for *some of us*, leastways."

"And why?" says I.

"Why? Why that there Walter Crane, of the 'Black Sheep,' has made off with all the club and trust money, and the 'Black Sheep' is shut up. A detective turned up in Breezy Downs to-day, and Crane must have got scent of it and cut away, and no wonder—for it turns out the feller's name ain't Walter Crane at all; but where he come from—and that 's London—he went by the name of Bobolink Ben, and was known to be one of the cleverest thieves and swindlers out. The perlice had lost sight of him for months, and only just now had tracked him down here; but once more the knave has been too sharp for 'em, and has got off, no one can tell where."

And as Jerry says this I hear a groan from my poor lodger.

"Oh dear me!" cries he, "what shall I do? And he 's got all my savin's. I wanted to be rich quick; and Crane he promised faithful that I should, and made me give him every shillin' that I could to *invest*, says he. And now, just when my poor boy 's bad, here 's all this trouble come upon us, and I 've debts everywhere, and nothin' to pay 'em with."

It was a sad case, and no denyin' of it. Me and Jacob did what we could to comfort the poor feller, and hearten him up; but, in course, he had done wrong, and brought his loss on hisself, makin' haste to be rich, and leavin' his bounden duty for the sake of the one thing he was strivin' for.

This bein' so, his punishment were bound to come; and, for all that me and Jacob was so sorry for him, we couldn't do nothin' to save him from what he 'd done.

It was while he was sittin' by his boy's bedside night after night (for the lad was very ill), that, thinkin' over the past, Alfred Saunderson came to understand what his wrong-doin' had been, and that his forgetfulness of the Lord was at the bottom of all his troubles.

"Oh, Mrs. Watson," says he to me one night, when I was tryin' to help him a bit in his boy's room. "Oh, Mrs. Watson, if I 'd only acted up to my early trainin', and to what my mother taught me at home, and my teacher at Sunday school—all this would never have happened.

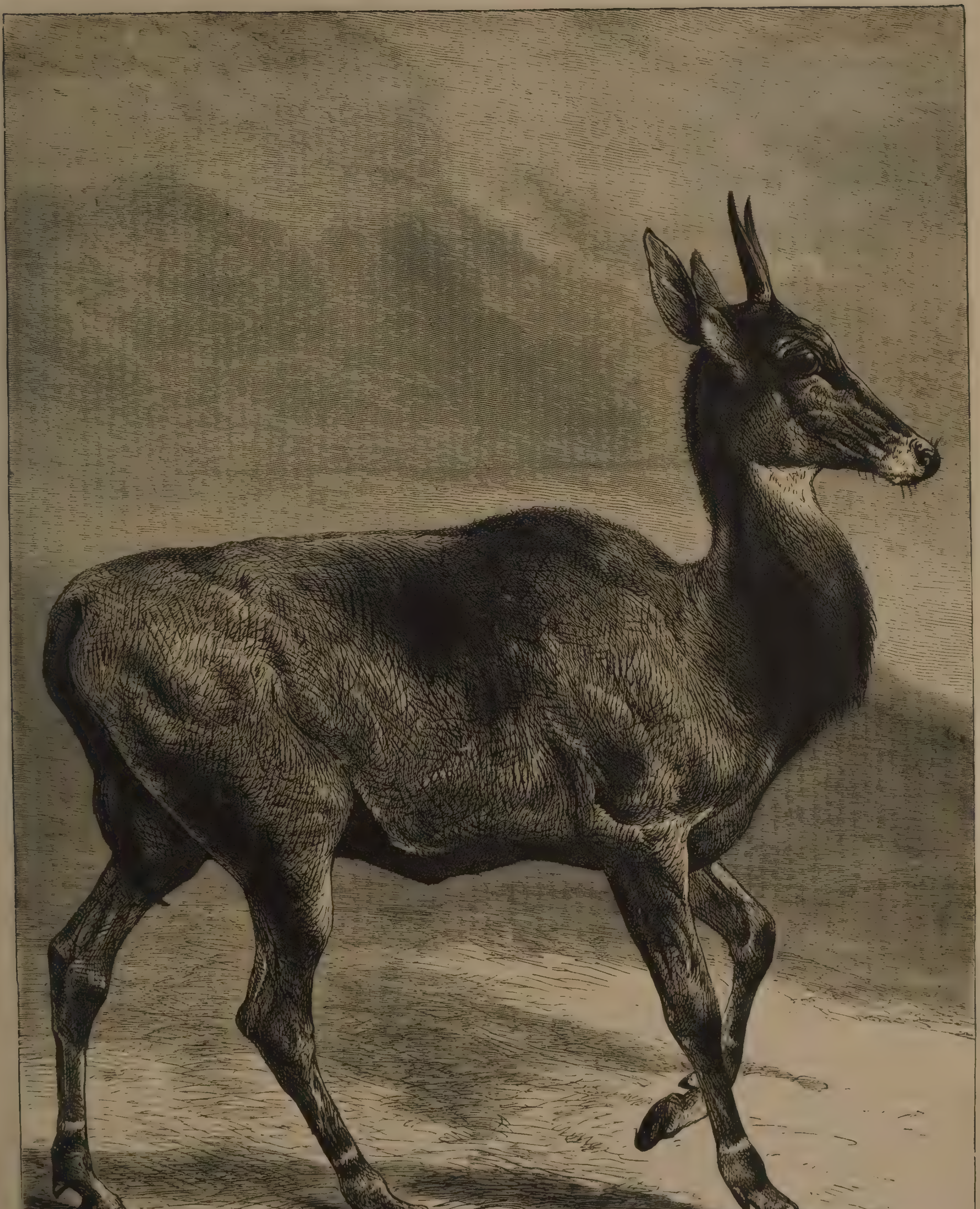
"But I just wandered away from God, slippin' down, down the hill, never heeding that I 'd turned my back upon all that was good—upon the kingdom of God and His righteousness. I seemed to sicken of my work, and came to be envious of them that had more 'n me. And always I were thinkin' how to grow rich, as others was. My head was so full of this that I didn't pay no heed to nothin' else. My poor boys have gone wrong, and all through this; my earnin's have took to theirselves wings and fled away, and I 've none but myself to thank for it.

"I 've been a bad man, a bad father, a bad Christian, and all for the sake of filthy lucre, and I haven't even gained *that*. And now my poor boy may be dyin' of a illness he 'd never have had but for me, for, if so be I 'd brought him up right, he wouldn't have gone poachin'."

Maybe that but for this sharp lesson Alfred Saunderson wouldn't have seen the error of his ways; but now things was made very plain to him—so plain that there was no mistakin'. The losin' of his money was hard enough, but the thought of losin' his boy was harder far; and when, after weeks of sufferin', Harry was at last said to be out of danger, the father's happiness was that touchin' and movin' as I never see the like.

"God 's been better to me, much better than I deserve," says he to me one day when Harry was up and about again; "and I hope," says he, "I hope I shan't never forget His mercy and His goodness no more. At least I 'm come to know now that anything as comes between a man's soul and his God must be of evil, though I didn't understand it at the time. I humbly pray my heavenly Father to keep me from strayin' from Him again, and to help me to set a good example to my sons, for His dear Son's sake."

Well, after them words of Alfred Saunderson's, there ain't no need to go on with this story. We know that in the lesson he 'd learned—hard though it were—he gained what was a thousand times more val'able than the money he lost; which money, by the way, he never got back, bein' as how it were spent long afore Bobolink Ben was caught by that there detective, though caught he was, I 'm glad to say, at last.



THE NYLGHAU, OR "BLUE OX."

THE NYLGHAU, OR "BLUE OX."

In the thickly wooded districts of India is found a curious and handsome antelope, called the *nylghau.* This name is of Persian origin, and signifies "blue ox."

The nylghau is rather more than four feet high, and its general colour is a slate-blue. The face is marked with brown, the long neck is furnished with a dark mane, and a tuft of coarse hair hangs from the throat. The female is smaller than her mate, and hornless. Her coat is generally a reddish-gray, instead of partaking of the slate-blue tint which colours the form of the male. The hind legs of this animal are rather shorter than the forelegs.

It does not seem to be of a social disposition, and is generally found in pairs inhabiting the borders of the jungle. There are, however, many examples of solitary males. It is a shy and wary animal, and the hunter is obliged to exert his bush-craft to the utmost in order to attain his purpose. To secure a nylghau requires a good marksman as well as a good stalker, for the animal is very tenacious of life, and if not struck in a vital spot will carry off a heavy bullet without seeming to be much the worse at the time.

The native chiefs are fond of hunting the nylghau, and employ in the chase a whole army of beaters and trackers, so that the poor animal has no chance of fair play. These hunts are sometimes very exciting, for the nylghau's temper is of the shortest, and when it feels itself aggrieved it suddenly turns upon its opponent, drops on its knees, and leaps forward with such astounding rapidity that the attack can hardly be avoided, even when the intended victim is aware of the animal's purpose.

Even in domestic life the nylghau retains its hasty temper, and its disposition is not at all to be depended upon. One of these animals which had been reared from a fawn by an officer, and was thought to be quite tame, turned suddenly upon its owner, and attacked him with such ferocity that it left him dead. The males are much given to fighting, and in their duels they hurl themselves forward with such furious velocity that the shock of their contending heads seems to be sufficient to crush the skulls of both the combatants.

No one knows when a nylghau will be offended, for it takes offence at the veriest trifle, and instantly attacks the object of its dislike. A captive nylghau, that once chose to feel insulted because a labourer happened to be passing near its abode, dashed at the man with such violence that it completely shattered the wooden paling within which it was confined.

Its hide is employed in the manufacture of shields, but the flesh is coarse and without flavour. The "hump" of the male, the tongue, and the marrow-bones are thought to be rather delicate articles of diet. Its gait is rather clumsy, but very rapid—a peculiar long-swinging canter, which is not easily overtaken.

The first pair of nylghaus seen in England were sent from Bombay to Lord Clive in 1767, and there are at present some beautiful specimens in the London Zoological Gardens.

◆

ROOM FOR A LITTLE ONE.

I always knew how it would be. It's just another sample of the way of the world. The hard workers slave for the idle ones; the careful and provident suffer for the shiftless lot, who neither know nor care how to-morrow's needs are to be met, if they can shuffle through to-day, in a pastime. The honest pay for the dishonest. The man who looks before he leaps has to climb down to help the helpless wounded fellow-creature lying below him, because he scorned either to look or be warned. I'm just sick of it all."

Richard Page spoke angrily, and his wife was not surprised at tone or words. He had begun with nothing in the way of money; but he had worked hard, deserved to be trusted, been careful and provident without being over-anxious, and, at fifty-five, was a fairly well-to-do man. His three sons had followed the father's example; one had lately married, the two younger were in excellent situations; but all were at a distance from the old home.

Mrs. Page, who had been used to have her boys to care for, spent a good many lonely hours now all had left the parent nest. She felt the loneliness the more because of an old sorrow.

"If only Annie had lived, what a companion she would have been for me! And this is her eighteenth birthday," she said to herself, on the morning that her husband gave utterance to the words already written.

The thought of Annie—the one little daughter, so precious during her three short years of life, so deeply mourned ever after—had put an idea into her mind which she had ventured to lay before her husband. That sharp speech of his was a sort of lecture in answer; and then Richard added—

"Put that notion on one side, once and for all. I'm not going to lift the load off Mary's shoulders. I warned her how it would be when she married Joe Sherlock, with eighteen shillings a week, no certainty of keeping that, and not enough furniture to make one room decent. She has made her bed—let her lie on it."

Mr. Page left the house, and his wife sat down to sew; but with thoughts far enough from the work she was doing. Here she was, alone, but surrounded with plenty. Mary Sherlock, her husband's sister, twenty years younger than himself, and once his pet and pride, was in a wretched two-roomed cottage, whence all that was worth taking had been carried off for rent. Joe was away, wandering she knew not where, in search of work. She had heard nothing from him for many months, and when at home and in work his earnings had mostly gone in drink.

Mary Sherlock had been a smart clever girl, and filled a lady's-maid's place before her foolish marriage. Now, her old mistress had come forward, and got one of Mary's boys into a school where he would be well trained. The elder was already an errand boy, but his master was so well pleased with the lad that he was going to take him indoors, and, as he put it, "make a man of him."

"If it were not for your little blossom of a girl, I would take you into my service again, Mary," said Mrs. Fielding. "If Joe came back he would have to try and make a home for you, since he has left you without a bed to lie on. In the meanwhile, there is room for you in my house, if any one will take your little Annie."

Mary Sherlock thanked her old mistress, and wished she could go to her It would be an awful wrench to part with little Annie, but——.

All at once the thought came, "Would Richard and his wife take my little darling? I called her after the girl they lost, and she's very like her. I could be happy in my old place if my precious one were in such hands."

Mary had gone, on the spur of the moment, with the child in her arms, and opened her heart to Eliza, otherwise Mrs. Richard Page.

The sight of little Annie was like food to a hungering motherly heart. Mrs. Page caressed the child, loaded the mother with many little helps to tide her over the coming days, and finally laid the matter before her husband, with the result that she got a lecture, and missed the usual kiss with which he accompanied his morning good-bye.

That was a dull and lonely day for Mrs. Richard Page.

Her husband was to be home at five. She resolved to meet him as though the echo of those sharp words had long since died away.

Richard was plainly of the same mind; for he gave her more than one kind kiss as she greeted him on his entrance, and, somehow, a feeling of hope stole into her mind as they sat down to table.

"Eliza," asked Mr. Page, "did you ever notice anything particular about that tree that hangs over a wall part of the way along Booth Street?"

"Yes, many a time. It is very curious. There is a little perfect tree growing straight and strong on one of the boughs of the large tree. It's not of the same sort as the one that feeds it."

"But the old tree looks none the worse for its nursling."

"It is all the prettier, and people who would never notice the old tree turn to look at the two together," said Mrs. Page.

"Aye. A seed has dropped into a little cleft of the bark, and has sprouted, and the sap has nourished it into vigorous life without impoverishing the other. Eliza, that tree has preached a sermon to me to-day!"

Mrs. Page was quick of comprehension. Her face lighted with joy; but she left the room without a word, to return with a lovely three-year old child, actually dressed in clothes that had been her own Annie's. She had been waiting in the next room with her mother, on the chance that uncle might change his mind.

"The child is here, Richard. Go to your uncle, Annie darling."

In a moment she was clasped to his heart. She was so like that other Annie long lost to, and mourned by, her parents.

"Where is Mary?" was the next question; and then the mother was called to receive a like welcome.

"God has been good to me, said Richard. "My home is like the large tree; it can support a little one without suffering. Mother here will be brighter and happier; your hands will be free for work, your mind at rest, your child always within your reach, Mary; and may God bless you and give you many happy years yet. Joe will come back, and we'll try to do something for him in time, you'll see. If there had been no helpless, careless, sinful lost folks to seek to rescue and to bless, there would have been no work for Jesus. And the work that He did He taught His disciples in their little way to do also, and thus follow in His steps."

TINKER, TAILOR, AND THE REST OF THEM; or, MRS. WATSON'S SEVEN LODGERS.

No. VII.—Thief.

"Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days. Give a portion to seven, and also to eight; for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth."

Them words—some of the wisest that there King Solomon ever wrote—is what I always thinks of when I remembers the story of my last lodger. For if ever a text was bore out by facts, this text were in his case. Let me tell the tale in as few words as a woman can.

We'd moved from Breezy Downs, and settled for the winter in a sheltered valley; a little river flowed through it past the village, and the north and east winds was shut out, so that the climate was a good bit milder than most places.

One damp windy night in November I hears a moanin' and a groanin' outside our cottage door, and when I goes to see the cause of the noise, I finds there a poor, ragged, dirty tramp, shakin' all over with ague, and lookin' that blue in the face as it might have been one big bruise.

"Jacob, please to come here," says I; and me and my husband just raised the poor feller up and brought him into the kitchen, where we set him down in the chimney corner, and give him some hot tea with peppermint and ginger in it.

Pretty soon the man stopped shiverin', and then, in course, came a hot fit.

"There's only one thing as 'll stop this 'ere," says he, "and that's the bitter stuff the doctors give you; quinine, I think they calls it."

And then it came to my remembrance that our doctor was to visit a neighbour of mine at eight o'clock this very evenin', and as he always carried physic with him, maybe he'd have some of them bitters too.

So off goes Jacob and catches the doctor, who said he must see the patient afore he give him the drugs. But the moment the doctor clapt eyes on our man, his face growed set and stern—such a kind face, too, as it were in general!—and, says he, "Why, Noah Bain, how came you here?"

The feller's eyes dropped afore the doctor's, and, says he, sullen-like, "And why not here, sir? A man must be somewhere."

"And what have you been about," asks the doctor, "since we met last in ——?"

"Don't, sir; don't say it!" cried the tramp. "What I've been a doin' of? Well, sir, I've been on the tramp mostly, takin' a job here and there, livin' from hand to mouth, as you might say, till them chills got me again, as I had when—when—I knowed you fust, sir. And to-night they was that bad, as I couldn't get no further, and this good woman and her husband they brought me in here."

"Very kind of them, I am sure," says the doctor. Then he give Noah Bain a bottle of physic, and beckoned me out of the kitchen into the passage, and shut the door.

"Mrs. Watson," says he, "it's only right you should know it; when last I saw that chap he was in jail for robbery with violence, and other things beside, and was working out a long sentence. Keep an eye on him, for I hardly think he's to be trusted even now. I was surgeon at that prison when Bain was there, and I saw enough of him to feel sure that when he was let out he'd make trouble wherever he went."

"But, sir," says I, in answer, "I couldn't turn a sick dog out-of-doors such a night as this, much less a Christian," I says.

"No, no, don't mistake me, Mrs. Watson," says he, "I wouldn't on any account have you do anything so unkind; only watch the man," he says, "and don't trust him too much, that's all. I'll come and see him again to-morrow; meanwhile, give him light food and his medicine, and keep him warm."

"And what's the doctor been sayin' to you?" says Noah Bain, very sharp and suspicious, when I gets back to the kitchen.

"Nothin' that 'll make us act no different by you from what we meant to," I answers; "for what we does, we does for His sake, who said, '*Ye did it unto Me.*'"

Noah Bain looked up as I said that, and the queerest expression come over his face. For one minute his eyes growed soft and moist, like a child's when it's sorry; but his mouth went down at the corners, and then opened and showed his teeth—for all the world like a snarlin' dog or wolf—so that I was fair puzzled, not knowin' what to make of the man.

We made him up a shake-down in a little slip of a room that we cleared of lumber, and my Jacob—dear kind soul that he was—got him into bed, and covered him up warm, and I made him some good milk gruel. The next day he was better, but not well enough to get up; and it was the fifth day afore he had strength to move about much. But on the sixth day, when we gets downstairs in the mornin', there were no Noah Bain to be found. He'd took French leave, and vanished without so much as a thank you kindly.

But me and Jacob we hadn't done it for thanks, so we didn't mind. We knowed, even then, what we know better still now, that nothin' we do for Christ's sake is ever throwed away, even though it may seem so at first. Sooner or later, the seed He bids us sow beside all waters springs up and bears fruit. Sooner or later—yes, and oftener it's late—so late that, now and again we wonder if it's ever goin' to spring up at all, and our faith seems to grow weak, and we almost doubt God's promises. And this was just what happened to me after Noah Bain left us.

It were about a month, I daresay, somewhere about the fifth of December, that we began to hear of folks in our neighbourhood losin' their belongings—both indoors and out. One old woman had the clock stole off her mantelpiece in the parlour one night while she lay asleep upstairs.

Another old woman—no, it was an old man this time—had put away all his savin's in a cracked teapot as he kept on the shelf, thinkin' it were safe enough in such an onlikely place. But when he came to look for it one fine day (the money, I mean) it was gone, and only the cracked teapot left. Then two of the villagers lost some young geese as was fattenin' for Christmas; and another had a little pig took clean out of the sty, and all without so much as a squeal, so clean and neat the job was done.

"It'll be your turn next," the folks says to us. And, sure enough, so it came about. One evenin' just at twilight, hearin' a to-do among our fowls (for we'd kept a little poultry since we'd been in the country), I goes out into the yard, knowin' that they was not gone to roost in their little house yet.

Creepin' round softly by the wall, of a sudden I hears a fearful squawk from our chanticleer, and I see the poor bird strugglin' and beatin' his wings almost as if he was cotched in a trap; and then the next minute he fluttered free; and close behind him, in the dim light, I see a man's hand full of feathers which he'd pulled out, a-holdin' on by the cock's tail.

In course I run round the shed double-quick, but was only in time to see a pair of old shoes on two great clumsy feet, disappearin' over the fence. But them shoes I'd have knowed anywhere, and likewise the feet as was in 'em: them disrespectable shoes and trampin' feet bein' the property of Noah Bain, and not the sort as any one would have cared to rob him of.

"It's hard, I must say," says I to Jacob at supper. "We try to do good, and this is the way we're rewarded."

"What did we do it for, wife?" says my Jacob, with his quiet smile. "Was it for reward?"

"No," says I, feelin' the water come into my eyes.

"We did what we thought was right, my dear," says he, "and there we must leave it. We cast the bread on the waters, and then God takes care of the rest."

"You're right, husband, as usual," says I. "Maybe the Lord will give us to see some good come out of this after all."

I never remember such a December as we had that year. No frost, no snow, nothin' but gales of wind and torrents of rain as reminded one of the deluge.

Our valley couldn't be better placed for shelter in cold weather, but it was bad as bad could be for wet. The river rose and rose, and got over its banks. The little streams from the hills all round came rushin' down like mad; some of the lower fields was flooded, and folks was often seen wadin' to their work. Our cottage stood low, but it was quite away from the village, and, so far, we'd seen no danger of bein' drowned out.

But one night we was waked out of sleep by the sound of a great rushin' like the sea. Jacob jumped up and looked out of winder.

"Wife," says he, "get up and dress this minute. The floods is out; the mill-dam must have gave way. The whole valley's one great sheet of water, and it's all round us, washin' the very walls."

We dressed—both of us—as quick as possible, and run downstairs. The water was coverin' the ground floor, and all the lighter things was afloat. We climbed the step ladder, restin' it agen the staircase winder, and we took a long look all round.

"And then, the next minute, he fluttered free, and close behind him, in the dim light, I see a man's hand."

"The water's gettin' deeper every minute," says Jacob. "There's no knowin' how long the house may stand. I'll get a shutter or two down, wife, and with the planks beside that I've got in the back kitchen, I'll try to knock together some sort of a raft, in case the house goes and me and you has to swim for it."

Away goes Jacob for his tools and things, and just then, bein' still lookin' out of the winder, I hears a shout, "Hi! Watson, Mrs. Watson! I say, wake up there!"

And there, comin', rollin', and tossin' over the dark water, I see a broad strong-lookin' boat. The moon peeped out just for a moment from behind a cloud, and who do you think I see a-workin' manful at the oars, and gettin' the boat into smoother water just agen or rather *above* our back door? Who, but Noah Bain!

"I've a big broad boat," he shouts to us; "there's room enough for any things you set special valie on; only hurry up," says he, "for there's danger of the foundations of the house givin' way; the water's well nigh up to the fust floor winders already. I'll wait for you outside that there back winder where the wind don't come."

In a quarter of an hour me and Jacob was ready. By that time the boat were just upon a level with the winder-ledge, and in we steps easy enough. Jacob takes one oar and Noah t' other, and they pulls away till we reach a high bank leadin' to a hill where no water couldn't lie.

"There's a farmhouse up yonder, and you'd better just go and ask for shelter," says our tramp. "They'll take you in and welcome, as—as—you did me;" and there came a bit of a sob in his voice.

"But you—what'll you do?" says Jacob.

"Me?" say he, in a dull quiet voice. "Oh, it don't matter about me."

"It does, though," says I; "come with us, and where we find shelter you will too."

So up the hill we went together, Noah havin' secured the boat to a tree. And on the way he told us how, when he see the floods risin', the thought of us in danger had grown more and more painful to him.

"It's true," says he, "I didn't feel as grateful to you for your goodness to me as I should have been; anyway, not at the time, nor for some time after; I'd led such a life that my heart seemed turned to stone. I don't think I much minded tryin' to rob you; for, in course, it was me as pulled out your cock's tail a-tryin' to catch him. But when I thought you was in danger of drownin'—you that maybe saved my life—it just seemed as if I couldn't a-bear myself; and down I went and borrered a boat, and set out to come to you. I'm a bad enough chap, but I ain't quite flint even yet or, if I be, there's sparks to be got even out of that."

Well, this here noble deed—for noble it were—seemed to be the turnin' point in that man's life. The better natur as was in him for once had conquered his wicked self, and, havin' gained the mastery, wouldn't be put down, bein' as how the Lord's good Spirit was strivin' within him, lest conscience should sleep again.

Seein' that the poor feller was wantin' to keep straight and do the right, and that he were findin' it precious hard acause of his bad past and folks treatin' him like the scum of the earth, Jacob says to him, "Look here, Noah Bain; you've been a real good Noah to us," says he, "comin' in your ark to rescue us, and now let's see if we can't do something for you. Come and lodge with us; we've got no one else, and I'll be bound we'll find you work soon."

So Noah Bain the tramp came and lived with us, changin' more and more, till all could see that God's grace was a-workin' in his heart, renewin' and sanctifyin' and makin' it fit for the Master's use. When we left the valley and came back to town, he moved with us. Then he and Jacob went into business together, and did well, and if you could see Noah Bain now, you'd find it hard to believe he'd ever been a tramp and a thief.

And with Noah Bain the stories of our lodgers comes to a end, for he was the last of 'em, and not a bad one to finish up with, since he showed how true is the text I began with, and how none that cast their bread on the waters need despair of findin' it again, even if it's after many days.

Mary E. Ropes.

RELEASED FROM PRISON.

Buddhist Priests.

A MISSIONARY in Siam records the following interesting incident:—

A Chinaman named Noi Sali, formerly in training for the Buddhist priesthood, became a Christian in June, 1887. He had been a sincere and fervid seeker for light, and upon its reception, he taught his own family and neighbours. Subsequently he was chosen to labour in the province of Chieng Dow.

One month's toil had been fulfilled with remarkable fruit, when he returned to visit his wife, who was dangerously ill. To his surprise, he was summoned to appear before the prince, who inquired whether he was the teacher of Christianity at Chieng Dow.

Noi Sali replied that he was the man, and, further, that he had at the station twelve families of believers. This apostle of his people was arrested, reviled, and chained in jail. The commissioner derided his faith by saying that inasmuch as he had espoused the cause of Christ, let him pray to Jesus, and *let Jesus come and save him.*

He had been falsely charged with teaching that Christians were free from Government obligations. Petitions were in vain offered for his release from a dungeon commonly termed a "hell upon earth," and in which thirteen prisoners died while he remained.

For months the victim was locked up in the pestilential house of bondage, his fellow-disciples meanwhile making endeavours to obtain his ransom. Their earnest prayers were in time effectual. The fetters were struck off the unoffending brother, who had no hope that relief was at hand until the jailor announced to him his liberty.

The second half and truly wonderful part of this episode is recorded by Dr. M'Gilvray. "We reached," he says, "the chapel as the second bell was ringing for our communion service.

We rose, and with grateful hearts sang the doxology. After the sermon by Mr. Dodd, Nang Soo, a daughter of the released prisoner, came forward and made her public profession by baptism.

This happy coincidence was a part of no plan of ours. Noi Sali and the whole Church had prayed to Jesus, and He had saved him, first by preserving his innocence, and now by his beautifully-timed release. None but the God of the oppressed could have arranged the events of that memorable morning.

During his imprisonment two other members of his family had united with the Church. This daughter had stood her first examination the month before, and her second that morning, before we started to the prison.

Even the morning before no uninspired prophet, in view of our former efforts and failures, would have been bold enough to predict the meeting of father and daughter under such happy circumstances that morning.

What a transition! from the chains of an Eastern dungeon to the fellowship of saints and the joy of witnessing his daughter's profession before a large congregation of worshippers.

While he had been in prison one hundred and thirty-three persons had been converted, a larger number than in any other eight months in the history of the mission."

Apostolic history is retold in this marvellous story. For Peter "prayer was made without ceasing of the Church unto God for him," in reply to which he was graciously liberated, and went to the house, "where many were gathered together praying," who were astonished to look upon him.

So by the power of supplication inquirers were led to the gates of grace and deliverance granted to the Laos prisoner.

* * *

DOST THOU SMOKE, BILL?

AMONG a parcel of tracts sent me by a friend, one was headed, "Dost thou smoke, Bill?" I read it, and it made me feel uncomfortable. Some copies of it had got into circulation among my people before I was aware. A fine black young man came to me one day and, after bowing and scraping and bidding me "good morning," asked—

"Will massa please gie me one little tract?"

"Yes, Quamina, and welcome; which will you have?"

"Dat tract called, 'Does you smoke, William?'"

He thought it would be too vulgar in my presence to say "Bill;" politeness led him to say "William." I gave him the tract, but I felt I would rather he had asked for any other than that, and my uneasiness was increased.

The tract was evidently exciting some attention. It was condemning amongst the people their pastor's habit. One night, soon after Quamina's visit, having knocked out the ashes of my last pipe before retiring to rest, I had a good talk to myself. I never despised myself more than I did at that moment. I resolved that from this night forth I would never spend another penny for tobacco. Having asked God to guide me, and to grant me grace and strength to carry out the resolve I had just made, I went to bed.

The next day was the commencement of a great conflict. At the usual time for taking the pipe, the craving for it was very strong. I managed to resist it, however, by putting to myself a few plain questions, such as:—

"What is the matter with you? Why are you restless and unhappy? Have you a headache?" "No."

"A toothache?" "No."

"Have you pain in any part of your body?" "No."

"Are you cold?" "No."

"Hot?" "No."

"Thirsty?" "No!"

"Then why, in the name of all that is rational, are you not contented, and even thankful to God for the freedom from pain which you enjoy?"

In this manner I lectured myself against the unnatural craving. Every time that I resisted the appetite I felt that I had achieved a victory; that my moral strength was increasing; that I was getting more into harmony with God's laws and my own conscience; and that my example, in regard to the youth of my congregation, was becoming more worthy of me as a Christian missionary and pastor.

Ere long the craving ceased; the appetite died away; I was free! And now I would not be again enslaved for "all the world calls good or great." Most devoutly do I thank God for my deliverance!

LEADING THE WAY.

A FEW evenings ago my little daughter, who had been spending the afternoon at a neighbour's, started with me through the darkness for home. It was the first time that she had ever been out of doors in the night, and everything seemed new and strange.

"Papa, I see lots of stars up in heaven," said she. "Why, papa, see how many houses have got lights in the windows."

As soon as her curiosity abated somewhat she began to be troubled about the way home. "I can't see our house, papa. I don't know the way; where are we going?" she said anxiously.

"I can see the road," I replied; "and if you keep hold of my hand, I will take care of you." Then she said, as if chiding and comforting herself—

"Yes, you do know the way, don't you, papa? You will take care of your little girl, 'cause you love her, don't you, papa?" After this she only grasped my hand a little tighter, and trudged cheerfully onward, wherever I led the way.

Ah! said I to myself, little one, you have rebuked and comforted me. How often have I, notwithstanding the care of my Heavenly Father, been troubled because I could not see my way clear to the eternal mansions.

As if it were not enough to know that God loves me, to infer surely that He will guide me safely to heaven. Let me but grasp the Saviour more firmly, and feel His presence in the darkness of trial and sorrow, and then shall I walk on sweetly, assuring my soul by repeating His own words of supplication—

"Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory which Thou hast given Me."

LET US DRAW NEAR.

WHY stand I lingering without,
In fear, and weariness, and doubt,
When all is light within?
O Thou, the new and living way,
The trembler's Guide, the sinner's Stay,
My High Priest, lead me in!

I know the mercy-seat is there,
On which Thou sitt'st to answer prayer;
I know the blood is shed;
The everlasting covenant sealed,
The everlasting grace revealed,
And life has reached the dead!

Without, the cloud and gloom appear,
The peril and the storm are near,
The foe is raging round;
Then let me boldly enter in,
There end my danger, fear, and sin,
And rest on holy ground.

A GRANDCHILD'S REBUKE.

SOME time ago, a gentleman was making too free with the Bible, and brought forward his strong argument against it; declaring, in the face of all present, "I am seventy years of age, and have never seen such a place as hell, after all that has been said about it."

His little grandson of about seven years of age, who was all the while listening to the conversation, asked him, "Grandpa, have you ever been dead yet?"

A CONTINUAL FEAST.

THE Bible tells us that a contented mind is a continual feast. A pastor tells this story of a member of his flock who had learned to be contented and even to rejoice in tribulation:

A poor widow, who supported herself with the most rigid economy by knitting, I saw in the intense cold of last winter. The house was one upon which time had made such sad ravages that only one room could now be inhabited, and in that she dared not have a fire when the wind blew hard, because the chimney had become unsafe.

"How favoured I am!" she said, "for when it has been coldest the wind didn't blow much; or there was so much snow on the house I could have a fire without danger; I cannot be thankful enough.

"And then," she continued, "Joseph has been at home every night almost all winter, and he could get my wood and water, when there was so much snow I could not get out.”

“But do you not feel very lonely while Joseph is away?”

“Oh no; I get along very well through the day” — her Bible lay on the table by which she was sewing—“and when I can see the neighbour’s lights in the evening they are company for me. I have thought a great deal about sick people this winter, and then I think how favoured I am that I can go to bed and sleep all night in health.”

I saw her again to-day. Rheumatism had disabled one foot, and she sat still sewing, with a swollen, painful limb raised upon a cushion.

“How favoured I am!” she exclaimed; “when my poor Lydia was alive I lost the use of both my feet for a time, and she took care of me; but now I can get about by moving my foot upon a chair, and I make out to do my work, and get son Joseph’s meals ready nicely. But what if it had been my hands!”

FOUND UPON THE WATERS.

A NARRATIVE was some time ago published, of a voyage to the South Seas, during which the vessel was wrecked, and the crew left for two years on an island.

Before the vessel sailed from England, whilst lying in the Thames, an agent of a Bible Society left a copy of the Scriptures on board.

Wrecked.

Nothing is said of the Book until after the wreck, when the author of the narrative says:—

“The most valuable thing we preserved from the wreck was our Bible; and I must here state that some portion of each day was set apart for reading it, and to its influence we owed a spirit of complete agreement among us which existed all the while we were on the island.

If ever a difference of opinion arose, a majority of voices decided the measure, and individual wishes always gave way to those of the greater part of the company. Peace reigned among us; for the precepts of Him who introduced peace and goodwill towards men were daily taught and practised.

The promise, ‘Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days,’ was in this case fulfilled to the letter. The Bible, when bestowed, was thrown by unheeded, it traversed wide oceans, was scattered with the wreck of our vessel, and was, in deed and in truth, found upon the waters after many days.

And not only was the mere Book found, but its value was also discovered, and its blessings, so long neglected, were now made apparent to us.

Cast away on a desert island in the midst of an immense ocean, without a hope of deliverance, lost to all human sympathy, and mourned over as dead by our kindred, in this invaluable Book we found the herald of hope, the dispenser of peace, the soother of our sorrows, and a pilot to the harbour of eternal happiness.”

THE NETWORK ON THE SKY.

Fair are the trees when the soft colours blended
By spring or autumn clothe each spreading bough,
But when the leaves have passed, their life-work ended,
An equal loveliness of form we know.

Bravely the chestnut to the tempest hearkens,
And with his sturdy arms the blast defies;
Softly the birch, all gray and silver, darkens,
Against the gray of quiet wintry skies.

We love the oak when sunbeams, in their playing,
His strong and massive lines are glancing through,
The lighter grace of willows idly swaying,
And far-spread elm-boughs pencilled on the blue.

The nightfall glows with more ethereal splendour,
Behind their curved and darkly outlined bars,
The peace of midnight seems more deep and tender,
And clearer shows the lustre of the stars.

So sorrow works its own rich compensation
When by untimely frosts our joys are shed,
For through the blanks of loss and separation
Come visions of the azure overhead.

The beauty of God's infinite designing,
His traceries of love we learn to see,
And rounding every twig in sunlight shining
The promise-buds of summers yet to be!

Mary Rowles.

NAT, THE QUARRYMAN.

By Eglanton Thorne,

Author of "Nathan Quilter's Fall," etc.

Chapter XI.—An Heroic Enterprise.

When the neighbours questioned Nat concerning his visit to Plymouth, they found there was little to be drawn from him about it. Apparently he had passed quite an uneventful day there, and Plymouth streets and shops had made no striking impression on his mind.

They wondered much what had taken him there; but he did not relieve their curiosity. Only to Mrs. Trewarne could he have spoken of his mother, and the sad remorseful feelings that had moved his heart as he stood beside her grave, and Mrs. Trewarne's gentle helpful sympathy he could know no more.

But his mind often returned to that quiet green corner in the crowded cemetery, and as often as it did so, he remembered the sad-faced woman whom he had met near his mother's grave. And once as he thought of her, it flashed on him that she resembled his sister Mary. Yes, there was actually a look of the bright, pretty young girl in the careworn, melancholy-looking woman, who must be many years older than Mary.

For years Nat had resolutely banished from his mind the memory of his sister, and now that her young face suddenly rose before him, it was hateful to him to think how fair it had been. Once more his heart was filled with bitterness towards that erring one—so pitifully young when the tempter found her—who had fallen, with the worst, saddest fall that womankind can know.

Well, he had said that he would not forgive her, and he never would. And still, after so many years, his face grew dark with anger as he recalled the past.

But his mother's heart had ever clung to Mary. She had grieved sorely for the girl who had fled in shame from her home. She had angered him by her persistent grief. He had thought sometimes that she must love Mary better than she loved him.

And why not? Suddenly, as a thought smote him, a tide of honest shame dyed Nat's face, and he struck his foot hastily on the ground, in anger and impatience with himself now.

Who was he that he should call Mary's conduct shameful? Had his mother no shame to bear save what Mary brought her? Had the tears she had so often shed been for her daughter alone?

No, indeed, often must his mother's heart have sunk within her at rumours of his wild escapades. His idleness, his revelry, the wild companions whose society he preferred to that of sober respectable men, must have added considerably to the burden of anxiety which weighed on her heart and undermined her health.

Yes, he had recognised the truth before now, though now only he avowed it fully. He had broken his mother's heart, for she might have borne the grief and shame of Mary's fall, if she had had the support and sympathy of a good steady son. Who was he, that he should hold himself better than his sister, that he should vow he could never forgive her?

Nat Youlton saw his life now as he had not seen it in the early days of his repentance, nor yet when first the sweet peace of forgiveness gladdened his heart. As his days pass on in the light and love of the father's home, the prodigal looks back with more and more loathing to the time wasted in the "far country."

The light of God's Spirit working within Nat Youlton gave him now a new revelation of his past self. He saw his sin as he had not been able to see it before, saw it in all its hatefulness, and understood the self-deception under which he had dared to judge and condemn another.

And as anew he realised the wondrous love that had forgiven him, he was overwhelmed with shame to think that one who owed so much to his Lord should dare to withhold forgiveness from another. Were not they both sinners, he and his sister? And assuredly Mary was not the greater of the two.

No, Nat had not yet reached the utmost depth of his repentance. He was slowly learning how strong within him was the power of sin, and what strength the old habits of mind still had. It was a step gained on the upward path when he bowed himself in fresh shame and contrition, and prayed that for the Saviour's sake he might be forgiven his harsh bitter feelings towards his sister.

From that hour she was often in his mind; but his thoughts concerning her were very different from what they had been. He wondered sadly if poor Mary still lived, and if so what her life had become. He had strange yearnings of heart towards her; he longed to find her and tell her of the Saviour, who offers pardon and salvation to the lost and sinful; who is as ready to welcome the outcasts to-day as He did long ago those of Judea.

The last days of autumn passed, and winter reigned supreme. It was a long severe winter, but the little one whom Nat had taken into his home throve in spite of the severity of the weather. Whilst children guarded by careful mothers took colds and coughs and various other childish ailments, little motherless Mary grew fat and sturdy, and developed an amazing hardihood.

It was almost provoking to some of the good matrons, eager to give Nat the benefit of their advice, that the child who had "only a man" to look after her should need no doctoring nor call for any compassion. No one could look at Mary and say "poor child," for she was as blithe and bonny as a child of her years could be.

It was agreed by all who interested themselves in the little one, that Nat showed himself "wonderful clever" where she was concerned, and could not have done more for her had he been her father.

One cold Sunday night, Nat sat alone in his little house reading his Bible by the light of an oil lamp. In the inner room, Mary, snugly tucked up by Nat's hands, slept in her warm little bed. Nat was reading the Psalmist's wonderful description of a storm at sea.

"Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and He bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet; so He bringeth them unto their desired haven."

As Nat closed the book and reverently laid it aside, his heart was echoing the refrain—"Oh, that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!"

He went to the door and looked out upon the night. The vision which met his eyes was one of beauty. The moon was shining through a golden halo, and the dark clouds scudding across the sky were illumined here and there by its silvery beams.

The house stood high above the sea, but, despite the distance, Nat's quick ear could detect through the rush of the wind another sound—the deep hoarse roar of the breakers below the cliffs. He shook his head as he went back into the house.

"We're not far off a storm now, I reckon," he said to himself.

Nor was he mistaken. He woke early in the morning to find a fierce gale blowing from the sea. The sleet beat sharply on the pane, windows and doors rattled in the wind. He lay and listened till his ear wearied of the roar of the wind, and the creaking and straining and jarring that resounded through the old house.

Suddenly another sound smote his ear—the dull heavy report of a gun fired far out at sea. Instantly Nat sprang to his feet, and began hurriedly to don his clothes in the dim uncertain light. Too well he knew what that signal meant. The loud rap on his door and the shout of a neighbour which followed were not needed to inform him that a disabled vessel was drifting towards their treacherous coast.

He took one look at Mary, saw that she still slept soundly, and then went out.

Early though it was, several persons were hurrying along the road which led down to the sea. He took the same direction, and presently, as he strode on, he could see in the gray light that already a small crowd had gathered on the narrow crescent-shaped beach between the two sharp headlands.

There had been terrible wrecks on that coast before; there would probably be such wrecks again; but true-hearted men and women never get hardened to such sights. It is always a strange and awful thing to watch human beings sweeping onward at the mercy of the elements to meet their death.

No one knew the hapless vessel or supposed that there were any but strangers on board her, yet women were wringing their hands and crying aloud as they saw her surely drifting to her doom, and men turned away as from a spectacle they could not bear to witness.

"What ship is it?" shouted Nat to the first man whose attention he could gain. It was necessary to shout, for the roar of wind and waves was well-nigh deafening.

The man shook his head.

"A bark bound for Boscastle to fetch a cargo of slate, I should say," he replied; "but there's no telling—such a wreck as she is. Will you have a look?"

Nat accepted the telescope the man offered him, steadied it on the shoulder of the other, and took a long look through it.

The foundering vessel was indeed in a deplorable condition. Her mast was gone; the waves washed her deck; to the naked eye only her black hulk was visible—now riding on the crest of a wave, and now sinking in a deep trough. But by the aid of the glass, Nat could discern a little group of human beings clinging to the stern.

"She'll strike on the Black Rock in ten minutes," said the man who had lent Nat the telescope, "and then there will be an end of her."

"There's a woman there," cried Nat, excitedly; "I can see! They have lashed her to the rigging. Man, we must do something. We can't stand here and see them all perish without stretching a hand to save them."

"Yes, yes, do something," cried a woman, passionately; "there must be something to be done."

"I'd like to know what," said the man Nat had addressed, "there's no time to get the lifeboat from Boscastle."

"What of that? We've got a boat here."

"You'd never think of launching that cockle-shell into such a sea as this?"

"Cockle-shell, you call it? It's a good stout boat."

"Those waves would soon swamp it. Man, it would be folly to attempt it. You would only throw away more lives."

"Yes, yes, yes," cried a woman's voice; "it is foolish to think of it. We don't want to lose our men."

"I'll try it," said Nat, with firm set face. "I'll try it for the sake of the woman. I've no wife to weep for me if I go down, and I know some of you'll be good to the little maid."

As he spoke he strode off towards the little creek where the boat was moored. "He's mad," muttered the other man; but he followed, curious to see what would happen.

He had no intention of volunteering to accompany Nat. In the old days they had been boon companions, and this man had often boasted that he was afraid of nothing, and would follow Nat wherever he led; but tavern braggarts are seldom truly brave, and this one was little likely to risk his life for the sake of another.

And indeed the attempt seemed well-nigh foolhardy. It was an awful sea that was breaking against the cliffs and sending huge flakes of foam far across the beach. The great foam-crested waves reared themselves into tall green walls ere rolling over they broke in mad fury on the rocky shore.

Such cruel, hungry, devouring waves they looked that the women might well shudder at the thought of any one daring to battle with them in an open boat.

But Nat was resolute, and when they saw that he was so, other men came forward to help him get out the boat; but no one volunteered to take an oar, till old Jim Wade stepped forward, saying—

"Nat, mate, you cannot go alone. I'll come with you if no stronger man'll offer."

"Nay, nay, Jim; it's no work for you," returned Nat, "it'll take more strength than you've got to pull through this sea. But never mind, if the young chaps is all afraid, I'll have a try by myself."

Happily courage is infectious. A hero never stands alone for long; the fire of his heroism will not fail to enkindle a like flame in hearts of poorer fibre. One man and then another and another followed Nat into the boat. And it was no false pride that prompted their action. A man might well be held justified from any taunt of cowardice who refused to share the hazard of such an enterprise.

So the boat was manned, and the tide being on the turn, it was possible to get it clear off the shore and steer it towards the Black Rock, to which the doomed vessel was now drawing perilously near.

It was terrible to watch the little boat as it buffeted with the mad billows. Again and again those who watched it from the shore cried out that it was hopeless, that they would all perish, and wildly shouted to them to come back.

The turmoil of wind and sea drowned their voices, and still the little boat kept bravely on, now riding on the crest of a wave, and now hidden in a deep cavernous hollow. But she seemed to make but little way, and already the lost ship had struck on the long dark reef of rocks.

But the hull was still visible, and the telescope revealed desperate beings clinging to the wreck, though the angry sea threatened at every moment to wash them from their hold.

On rode the brave little boat. No lifeboat could have breasted the waves more gallantly. It was drawing near to the wreck now, braving too its worst peril amid the sharp rocks swept by the cruel breakers.

The excitement of those who watched from the shore grew intense. Many a one who was not wont to call upon God fell on his knees then, and cried to the great Father to save the lives of those drowning men, and of the brave fellows who had gone to their rescue.

And surely those prayers were heard. Who can tell how it came to pass? Neither those who watched nor those who worked with stout hearts and iron muscles could afterwards give a clear explanation of what happened. The end was gained, the wreck was reached, and each shipwrecked one brought in safety to shore.

And amongst those who were lifted dripping and half-dead from the boat was the unconscious form of a woman. She was carried to the nearest house, and kind womanly hands tended her, and kind hearts welcomed her back to life from the very gate of death.

And now Nat's mates were ready to make a hero of him. It was all his doing, they said, the shipwrecked strangers owed their lives to him. All honour to the brave fellows who had followed him; but it was only just to avow that but for Nat's bold resolute conduct, no one would have dreamed of making the attempt. But Nat would not listen to such words. He did not want praise, and he angrily repudiated the suggestion some one made concerning a medal.

It was enough for him that the precious lives were saved. So he shook off, with somewhat of his old curtness, the people who crowded about him, eager to express the admiration with which he had inspired them. He could not stay to talk then, he said. He wanted to get home and change his wet clothes, and find out how little Mary had fared during his absence.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THOUGHTS ON CHILDREN.

By an Old Bachelor.

Up to about six years ago I knew nothing about children, and cared less, but, will you believe it, my friends tell me now that I am quite fond of them, and my sister declares that I spoil every one of hers. Of course you won't believe that, for I am an old bachelor, and it stands to reason I shouldn't think of spoiling the young monkeys.

Oh dear no! I can look as stern as old Bluebeard himself when I hear bad news of any of my little nephews and nieces, and no cocoa-nut candy finds its way into the mouths, no bright pennies find their way into the pockets of those who have been naughty.

Naughty! What a dreadful word that is to be sure! What a change it makes in the poor little faces! How it banishes the childish sunshine, and surrounds the little morsel of humanity with clouds!

I am always sorry for a naughty child. Let me tell you what first made me think much about children at all.

It was a glorious June day, and I was lying lazily in a field trying to catch the beautiful effect of the sun on the wild flowers, and to put it down on paper, to make a picture that might take a bit of the country to smoke-dried Londoners.

Just in the middle of the field there stood a gray mare and her little foal. The mother leant her head lovingly on the back of her baby, and seemed contented enough; but, bless your heart, the baby didn't want to stand still two seconds. It kicked out its heels and tossed up its head; it flourished its tail, and seemed as if its limbs were on wires.

I found myself watching the little creature, and wondering unconsciously whether it would roll or jump, or gallop or kick next, but it seemed to do all four at once.

Then, all of a sudden, the thought struck me—what a fool I have been all my life! Here have I been avoiding children, dreading the sight of them, hating the sound of them, because they are never still. Why it seems to me that life means movement to that young foal; I know it does to kittens and lambs—why should it be different with children?

Just then I saw a pretty sight—a wee girl came into the field. Of course her hat was not on her head; what country child ever does put her hat where it ought to be if she is left to herself? The sun was blazing hot, and actually I felt inclined for a moment to run and tell the child that she would get a headache if she didn't take care. Then I remembered that I did not like children, and therefore it could not possibly matter to me whether she got a sunstroke or not.

Still I couldn't help watching the child. She was carrying her hat very carefully, instead of swinging it round and round by the string, as I expected. I raised myself a little, and saw that the hat was filled with tit-bits—carrot-tops, and such things as horses love. Then I guessed what the youngster was after. She went straight to the little foal, who looked at her, and tore round for a few minutes.

"Certainly she will get kicked," I thought, and actually got up once to run and fetch her out of harm's way, but I soon sat down again; what business was it of mine whether she did get hurt or not?

Evidently the mare knew the child well. She stayed patiently by, stooping her head to nibble at one of the tempting little dainties; but the bold little maiden gave her a pat on the nose for impertinence—evidently the treat was for the baby, not for the mother.

In course of time the foal, having made up her mind that there wasn't an earthquake coming, returned to her mother's side, and began nibbling contentedly the pleasant dish held up as high as the child could hold it. Will you believe it, I was very busy for the next few minutes. I must have been a little crazed, I think, for when I came to myself, I found I had made a picture of the three; here it is on the next page.

I keep a copy of it in my room, to remind me that there is something better than selfish contentment, and that is the pleasure one derives from making others happy.

My heart warmed towards that little two-pennorth-of-halfpence, whose arms would have ached long before the foal had finished; but alas! the happy scene was soon disturbed.

"Mar-i-a, Mar-i-a," screamed a harsh voice, and at the sound the little arms seemed to lose their strength; the hat fell to the ground, where the foal calmly turned it over with her nose and proceeded to finish her meal. Worse still, the little face which had been so bright, clouded over, and the child looked scared.

"Here you are, you tiresome little hussy!" said a big brawny woman, pouncing on the baby as a cat might on a mouse, and shaking her very much after the same style. "If I don't—"

But the great bully never finished her sentence. I upset my easel and knocked over my paint-box, but I got there in time to stop the hand uplifted to box the child's ears; and the woman stared at me in surprise, as I took the little one in my arms.

"Were you never a child yourself, woman?" I shouted.

"Well, yes, I suppose I were, but it's so long ago that I forget what I was like. She's a naughty girl; her mother's ill, and I've got charge of her for a month, and a nice dance she leads me. She can't keep still a minute. Let me have her, sir, and I'll take care that she

doesn't get out of bed for the next twenty-four hours."

Meanwhile the little child clung to my neck, actually put her arms round and clung tightly. "Don't let her take me," she sobbed, "I didn't know it was wrong. Mother always lets me feed the horses." Only it was said in baby language, which I hardly understood.

Thus did I find myself unexpectedly changed from a selfish hard-hearted old bachelor, who hated the sound of children, to the champion of this ill-used baby.

"I'm staying at the vicarage, I'll take her up there for an hour or two; you can get on with your work, and the house will be quieter for her sick mother."

"And I'll punish her when she comes home," said the virago, shaking her forefinger at the child.

You may be sure little Maria never had that punishment, for the good vicar's wife found her a snug little nest in the vicarage, where she remained until her mother was well.

As for me—well, I thought so much over that scene in the field that I could write a book on the treatment of children, but as that isn't what you want just now let me tell you some rules which I made for myself:—

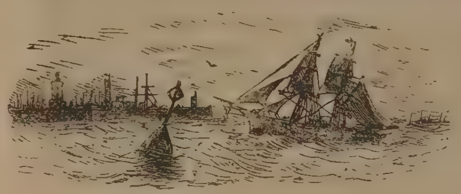
I. Never correct a child when you are angry. Wait till you are calm, then correct if necessary.

II. Never punish a child without remembering that there was a time when you were young and tiresome too.

III. In your treatment of children always try to remember that it was of a *child* that Jesus said "of such is the kingdom of heaven;" therefore there must be something beautiful in the most tiresome child's character, —try to find it out.

[*Drawn by Charles Whymper.*

"Look up, look up! and you will see the light in the sky."



IN THE EARLY MORNING.

Jenny Watson's husband was a sailor, and she lived in a village not far from a seaport town, from which his vessel went out and returned every few months. Her early home had been in what London people call "The Shires," and Mike Watson had fallen in love with her, when he had run down to see some relations in the neighbourhood. So they married and settled on the coast, and though to be sure it was lonesome when he was at sea, and she away from her own friends, yet like a true wife she was willing to give up everything, and when he was at home that made up for all.

Perhaps he might be ashore for ten days or so, and then off to the sea again for two or three months, so it was not much they had of each other's company; and when Jenny sighed and moaned over having to part with him for all the dangers and uncertainties of the waves, Mike would say—

"But 'tis worse for me than for you, lass; 'tis my opinion we are a deal safer on sea than you on land, so *I'm* the one to be anxious." This being a sailor's view of the matter, did not commend itself to Jenny.

The years passed on till Jenny had grown into a middle-aged woman, and Mike into a weather-beaten man, whose face would tell at once that he had seen much service on the sea. They had kept very loyal and loving to each other, but I am afraid neither Mike in his solitary night watches, nor Jenny by her lonely fireside, had much thought beyond this present world. They never sought Him who "holdeth the waters in the hollow of His hand," and so they lost the comfort of feeling that they were each in His safe keeping, though separated one from the other.

But nothing had ever as yet happened to Mike, though storm and shipwreck were ever present to Jenny's mind when he left her.

"Cheer up, Jenny woman," he was saying as he wished her good bye for the last time, "I've never been drowned yet, and please God, I'm not a going to be." Then she watched the ship till it had faded away on the horizon, and sad at heart, went back to her country cottage.

It was some time after this, that Jenny going into the town for a little shopping, heard some terrible news. There had been a collision at sea, and Mike's vessel had gone down with all hands on board. Stunned and stupefied, poor Jenny rushed back to her cottage an altered and a stricken woman.

For a long time she sat like one in a dream. The neighbours came in and out (as neighbours always will in their kindness), but she took no notice. They tried to comfort her, but their words were in vain. At last she roused herself to do her work, and, as the morning came round, she would sweep her room and light her fire—but it was done mechanically—there was no spirit in it, and never a smile was seen on her face. Her thoughts were not a moment absent from the scene which she pictured—the darkness of the night and the sudden crash, and the cries and the struggles, and then *death*.

If she could only have seen her Mike laid in the village churchyard, where some day she would lie beside him; but to think of him at the bottom of the dark, deep, cruel sea—oh! it was horrible. Then came bitter thoughts of God—people said He was love, but it could not be love to take away her husband in this way. Alas! how can anybody bear up against sorrow if they know not in their own hearts the love of God in Christ? And this Jenny Watson did not know.

So weeks rolled on, and one morning after a sleepless night, she wandered out, she cared not whither, and, in the dim gray light of an autumn morning, she sat herself down in the fields.

The bats were taking their last flight before returning to some barn or outhouse till the evening, the rabbits out for their morning meal, paused on the dewy grass to stare at the strange creature sitting among them, with her hands clasped motionless as themselves; the long dry grass and a few gaunt half-withered flowers, looking sore and sad as the mourner herself, while far away on the eastern sky the first streak of day was gradually brightening.

Jenny Watson sat there all unheeding. There! was she dreaming, or did some voice come to her from those outward things—the bats and the rabbits and the flower-stalks, and from the morning light in the heavens? She hardly knew, but this was what she seemed to hear:—"The great Creator who made us, watches over us day by day. He made *you* and watches over *you*. He sends the rain and sunshine for the flowers, provides the grass and tender shoots for the wild creatures of the earth, and the food they need for the creatures of the air. Are all things ordered for *us* and not for *you*? Look up, look up, and you will see the light in the sky!"

Perhaps she *was* dreaming, but at any rate the dream brought comfort. It was as if the voice of God brought a message to her heart. It was softened and she wept. She bent her head upon her hands and prayed. A poor earthly sort of prayer it was, just a feeling after somebody or something which could heal and help; but then *a sense of want* is the first requisite in the prayer that God hears.

And God did hear we are sure, because the next thing was, she went home, took down her forgotten Bible from the topmost shelf in the cupboard, dusted it and opened it. How strange that she had never thought of seeking comfort there before! She read it that day, she read it every day, and the Holy Spirit sent it to her inmost soul. In the thought of her own state before God, she forgot her sorrow, and when at last she found peace in a Saviour who had died for her, she found also submission to His will.

And when the neighbours wondered to see her so calm and peaceful, she would say—"Ah! that autumn morning in the fields with the rabbits round me, I think I had a dream, or rather I believe it was the Lord Himself who spoke to me, through my conscience."

M. K. M.

NAT, THE QUARRYMAN.

By Eglanton Thorne,

Author of "Nathan Quilter's Fall," etc.

Chapter XII.—Brought Home.

It was evening ere Nat Youlton was again seen in the village. The weather continued so rough and squally that it was impossible to do much at the quarry, so, to little Mary's delight, he spent the greater part of the day at home.

But he was not left to himself during its hours. Many of the neighbours looked in to have a chat with him on the exciting incident with which the day had begun, and in the afternoon the old parson himself came to grasp Nat's hand, and speak some kind words of congratulation and sympathy.

"It was nobly done, Youlton," he said, "it makes me glad and proud to know that a Trevena man has shown such heroism. And how glad you must be to think of the lives you have saved."

"Not I, sir, it was the Lord's doing. I reckon they cried unto the Lord in their distress and He heard them. Anyhow, it was with a prayer in my heart that I stepped into the boat. I were always a well plucked one and proud of my spirit, but I'd never have tried to pull through a sea like that in the days when I was not a praying man. I'd be the last to throw a word of scorn at any of the fellows that held back, for it was by a narrow squeak we escaped drowning, and that's true."

"Ay, indeed it is. I would not have believed it possible that the thing could be done. You have cause to be proud of your strength and courage, Youlton."

Nat shook his head.

"I'm glad we got the poor creatures off the wreck, sir. I thank the Lord for that with all my heart; but it's little cause I have to cherish pride. If I did help to save a few lives, what is that set against the lives I've helped to destroy. Ay, I have been a destroyer, not of men's bodies perhaps, but of their souls.

"Ah, sir, you cannot think how bad it is to see evil which is the fruit of your own ill doing. There are men in Trevena whom I first enticed to drink, when they was young chaps, and now they are slaves to drink. They was ready enough to come after me when I led them to evil; but I can't get them to turn round now and follow me when I would lead them the other way. One may repent of the past—the Lord knows I have repented—but we can't hinder it from bearing fruit."

"That's true, unhappily," the clergyman replied, "we cannot undo the past, however we may deplore it." Then with a change of manner, he asked, "Have you seen anything of the shipwrecked ones, Nat, since you brought them to shore?"

"No, sir; I have not been to the village since; but they tell me they're all doing well. The woman was the most exhausted, poor thing, they had hard work to bring her round."

"Yes, I have seen her. She is at Mrs. Brown's, and when I looked in just now Mrs. Brown would have me see the stranger. She was in bed and seemed very weak, poor woman.

I only said a word to her, but it was more than she could bear, for she burst into tears at once, and hid her face in the pillow, as if she could not bear that I should look at her."

"Poor thing," said Nat," "it 's no wonder she was upset. Such a shock is enough to upset any woman."

"To be sure it is. We must see what we can do to help her. I wonder where her friends are. It seems that she had no one belonging to her on board the vessel. Do you know, Youlton, it is a strange thing, but there was something in her face, though I only looked on it for a minute, which reminded me of your mother."

"Really, sir!"

"Yes, indeed, there was. It is odd how one sees likenesses sometimes."

"Yes, sir, it is," replied Nat, thinking of the woman he had met at Plymouth, who had borne that strange resemblance to his sister Mary. And long after the parson had left him he sat thinking of her and of the mother who had loved them both so tenderly, and whose love had known such bitter disappointment.

When Nat went to the village in the evening, he saw the men whose lives he had saved, and had a talk with the captain of the little vessel which had gone down.

Ship and crew were of Falmouth, and were making for Boscastle when the storm struck them. It had burst so suddenly that there had been no time to make for harbour, as the captain would otherwise have done, knowing well the dangers of that rugged coast.

When questioned concerning his woman passenger he had little to tell. He did not usually take passengers, but had taken this woman, who had served as stewardess on an ocean steamer and was used to sea ways, because a friend had asked him to do so.

She had been ill and was badly off, and wanted to get to Boscastle with as little expense as possible, and he thought he was doing her a good turn by consenting to make room for her. He believed she had friends at Boscastle, at least he had heard her say that she had been born and brought up in that neighbourhood.

"What was her name?" Nat asked.

"Bruce," was the reply.

"Bruce!" repeated Nat,. "I never knew any one of that name here, and I 've lived in these parts for most of my life."

But he felt so much interested in the woman after he had learned that she was no stranger to Cornwall, that he called at Mrs. Brown's cottage on his way home to inquire how she was. Mrs. Brown reported her to be recovering, but still too weak to leave her bed.

On his way home from work on the following evening, Nat again stopped at Mrs. Brown's door. This time she begged him to come in, and entering her neat flagged kitchen, he saw, seated in a large armchair by the fire, the woman he had saved. She was very pale and was lying back in the chair with her eyes closed, but at the sound of Nat's steps on the stone floor, she opened her eyes, and on seeing him a deep flush dyed her face, and her manner became painfully agitated.

"I hope you are feeling better," said Nat awkwardly as he advanced towards her.

"Oh yes, much better," she said quickly, "I shall be quite well in a day or two."

"That 's good," said Nat. Then he gave a start of surprise as he recognised the pale sad-eyed face of the woman he had met in the Plymouth cemetery.

"Sit down, Nat," said Mrs. Brown, bringing forward a chair, "sit down and have a talk with her whilst I go and look after my cow. She 's been saying that she wanted to see you."

Nat took the offered chair without a word. He was possessed by a feeling of bewilderment.

"Yes, I wanted to see you," said the woman nervously. "They tell me we owe our lives to you; they say no one would have tried to save us if it had not been for you. I thank you with all my heart—though my life was hardly worth the saving—yet life is dear to every one."

Her voice failed her. A choking sensation in her throat made it impossible to say more. Nat could see big tears rising in the eyes that were gazing so sadly into the fire.

"Of course; it's right it should be," said Nat, "I 'm real glad you were saved, and so will your friends be, I reckon."

"I have no friends," she said abruptly.

"To be sure; you told me so when I met you that day in the cemetery. Do you remember meeting me there?"

"Of course I remember it," she said.

"Well, well, you must not be down-hearted about yourself," Nat said encouragingly, "stay here if you can, and you 'll soon make friends. They tell me you was brought up in this neighbourhood."

She did not reply. The colour in her face deepened as she felt his eyes fixed earnestly on her. He was thinking that the parson was right; there was indeed a look of his mother in the worn sad face before him.

"There 's a look in your face I seem to know," he said suddenly. "Tell me—what was your name before you married?"

Her face grew white. She shrank from him in fear.

"Oh, don't ask me," she cried excitedly. "When you know you will wish you had not saved me. And yet it is vain to hide it. That day you saw me in the cemetery, I had gone there to seek my mother's grave. *You* showed it to me, for the name on the headstone you pointed out was the name I once bore."

For a moment he could not grasp the meaning of her words.

"The name!" he repeated, with a puzzled air. Then as light dawned on him he started forward crying—"You don't mean that you are Mary—my sister Mary? But she was so much younger."

"I am Mary," she said tremulously. "Sorrow has aged me; the weight of the life-long burden I brought on myself in my wilful folly has made me an old woman before my time. Yes, I am your sister, Nat, the sister who disgraced you, and whom you swore you would never forgive."

Nat did not speak for a few moments; but the feelings which kept him silent were not such as Mary supposed. She expected to see him recoil from her, and to hear bitter words of reproach to fall again from his lips. Instead he came near to her and put his arm about her neck, saying tenderly—

"My poor sister! Thank God, you have come back."

"Oh Nat, can you say that?" she cried. "Can you indeed forgive me?"

"It 's not for me to talk of forgiveness," he said, "such a one as I have been—a lost sinner but for God's grace."

"Ah, do you say that? It 's true then what Mrs. Brown was telling me that you 're quite a different man from what you used to be?"

"I hope so. I trust I am indeed a new man in Christ Jesus."

"And I too have long tried to live a better life by the help of God."

"Thank Him for that. You have had many troubles I fear, Mary."

"I have truly. It is never easy for a woman who has lost her character to make her way. But God has been very good to me. Kind friends found me out in my misery, and sent me abroad, where I soon obtained work. Then I met with a good man who loved me and was willing to marry me in spite of the stain on my past. He was a sailor belonging to an ocean steamer, and I got employed on board the same vessel as a stewardess.

"I liked the life well enough; but one night in a gale my man was swept overboard, and about the same time my little girl whom I had left behind at Melbourne died, and I was alone in the world. I hardly know how I bore it; but I did somehow, and went on with my work as a stewardess, till last year I fell ill and had to spend many weeks in the hospital at Plymouth."

"And afterwards?" he said, as she paused.

"When I came out of hospital," she continued, "I was so far from strong that the doctors told me I must not think of taking another voyage. I stayed on at Plymouth vainly trying to find work till nearly all my money was gone, then I heard of a situation at Falmouth and went down there to see if I could get it."

"But I was too late, and when I found myself in Cornwall the longing to see Trevena again came to me with such force that I could not resist it. How strange it all seems! I did not even know whether you were still living here, and then I was wrecked on the very shore where I was born, and my brother's hand saved me from death!"

"Strange indeed," murmured Nat, "but we are all in God's hands, and His ways are past finding out. I thank Him that He brought you back to me through that stormy sea."

"Truly it is through a stormy sea that I have come," she returned.

"But the storm is over now," he said with a smile, "to-morrow you must come home to me."

"Come home!" she repeated.

"Yes, come home to my house. That is your home now."

"But your wife may not care—"

"I have no wife," he said, "nor ever shall have."

"What! you are not married. Was not that your own little girl I saw with you at the cemetery?"

"No; she is no child of mine, though dear to me as if she were. You shall help me to take care of her. She 's a bonny little maid, and you cannot but love her. Come, come, don't cry now; I want you to be happy."

"I am happy," she answered, whilst the tears ran down her cheeks; "oh, Nat, it seems too good to be true. I never thought to have a home again. Oh, how I wish that *she* could know! But the past can never cease to be full of pain. We cannot tell her how sorry we are!"

Nat understood that she was speaking of their mother.

"I 've thought that many times," he said in faltering tones; "no, we cannot tell her, and we can't undo the past, that 's the pity of it. But I think sometimes that perhaps, up in heaven, she knows."

[THE END.]

Young hearts, full of glee.

WINTER THOUGHTS.

The skies are leaden, the ground is white,
And the winds are keen and nipping,
Shaking snow from their pinions light,
Dead leaves from the brown trees stripping.
"Alas! the winter is here once more!"
The children all are sighing;
The bleak blast howls, and the sea waves roar,
And foam-like the snow is flying.

Wherewithal shall we greet this guest—
We, that mourn for the summer?
How shall we meet old Winter best—
This snow-clad, stern new comer?
Shall we cower about the blazing hearth,
And bask in its ruddy light,
Shut out the picture of wintry dearth
As a most unwelcome sight?

No; better far, while the Frost King's reign
Holds undisputed sway,
Come out, and meet in his own domain
That turbulent prince half-way.
Be not cowards that shiver and shrink;
Have hearts that are bold and warm!
Brave lads and lasses surely, I think,
Must welcome a grand snowstorm.

Running, snowballing, sledging too,
Till the young hearts, full of glee,
Cry out, "O Winter, it is not true
That you are an enemy!
Nay; you are as much God's messenger
As the spring with balmy air;
And many a gift you leave for her,
And a blessing everywhere!"

Oh, little one, when over thy life
The gloomy winter steals,
When the world about thee seems at strife,
And the touch of trial seals
With frosty finger the founts so fair
That once ran crystal streams,
And thou dost shrink from the toil and care
That have followed the summer dreams.—

Come out, and stand under God's free heaven,
Braving the blasts of sorrow,
Accepting cheerfully all that is given,
Fearing not for the morrow.
For so shall the winter of discipline
An angel of mercy be,
A pledge of love and of strength Divine
That the Father sends to thee.—M. E. B.

THE WIDOW'S MITES.

She threw in two mites, which make a farthing.

"JESUS sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And He called unto Him His disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: for all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living" (*Mark* 12. 41—44).

"And He looked up, and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury. And He saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites. And He said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all: for all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had" (*Luke* 21. 1—4).

Jesus sat with steadfast eye
Looking on the treasury.
Many rich and noble passed;
Many splendid gifts they cast.
At the last a widow came,
Low her state, and mean her name:
In the box two mites she threw—
What was that in human view?

One there was whose piercing sight
Looked upon the widow's mite;
One who seeth not as man,
But the hidden thoughts doth scan.
On the ear His accents fall—
"She hath given more than all:
They did of their plenty give,
She her all whereon to live."

Jesus, from Thy throne above,
Still Thou markest gifts of love,
And dost hail with favour kind
Offerings of a willing mind.
Thou hast died my soul to save:
May I bring Thee what I have,
And, however prized it be,
Freely yield it up to Thee!

STARVING, YET RICH.

"Now then, mother, good-bye, and keep up heart; I'll soon get rich, and send you some money."

So said the strong young man, as he left his aged mother to seek his fortune in the far-off west of America. Times were bad, and work was scarce here; and as he had heard that money was to be made in plenty there, he had resolved to go forth and try what he could do.

His mother was grieved to part with him, but she had full faith in her son (as what mother has not?), and so she only said, "Go, and God bless you."

Still, it was very lonely after he was gone, and weeks and months passed by, moreover, without tidings of him. She struggled on, but she was often nearly starving. The cupboard was empty, and her heart heavy. At last came a letter, bright and cheering, full of love to her, but, alas! there was no money. True, there was a bit of paper in the envelope, and what it was she did not know; but clearly *that* was not money. She had fancied some gold sovereigns coming in her son's letter, but there was nothing of the kind. Anyhow, she was very glad to hear from him; so the letter was put carefully away in a drawer, and things went on as before.

Soon they got worse and worse though; yet still she clung to hope. "My dear son, he promised he would take care of me, and I know he will." This was what she said to a friend who came in to see her one day when she had eaten her last bit of bread, and knew not where to look for any more. She lived in such a lonely place she had not many neighbours, and this one came just at the right moment.

"Are you *sure*," he asked, "that there was nothing in the letter that you told me about?" "Oh, quite sure; at least, there was a bit of paper with a picture on it, but that's nothing."

"Well, I'd like to see it, if you don't mind," returned her friend.

The old woman went upstairs, unlocked the drawer, and brought down the letter. Her neighbour put his hand into the envelope in search of the "bit of paper," and brought out, as he had expected, a bank-note!

"My good woman," he exclaimed, "your son *has* kept his promise. While you have been starving, you have had money enough here to keep you in comfort, only you did not know it!" He soon changed it for her into five golden sovereigns, and then the thankful mother understood the mysteries of the "bit of paper" of which she had thought so lightly.

You smile at the poor woman's ignorance; but do you know that *you* have a Letter containing riches, which, possibly, like her, you have never put to use. It lies in your drawer, or covered with dust on your shelf; meanwhile, you are poor and needy, and hungering after food, while you might have bread enough and to spare; you sicken and die, when you might live; you are weighed down with debts, when, in that letter, is the receipt which shows that every debt is paid.

The Word of God is the letter; a letter from God Himself. It says, "Come and buy wine and milk without money and without price." It says, "When they had nothing to pay, He frankly forgave." Jesus says, "I am come that they might have life."

Yes, in the Bible there are *eleven thousand promises!* Just think of that: not only promises, they become facts to us if we will only trust them. It is faith which makes them real to us. We have got them, but they do us no good till we just go to the Lord Jesus, and say, "Lord, I confess my sins; I believe that Thou hast died for my sins; I believe that Thou wilt keep me; I believe that Thou wilt take me to heaven."

Then the promise, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ *and thou shalt be saved*," like the bank-note changed into gold, becomes a glorious reality to us. Go, then, and fetch your letter and look at it again, and may God's Holy Spirit teach you to find unthought-of treasure in His precious Word.

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HAPPY OLD AGE.

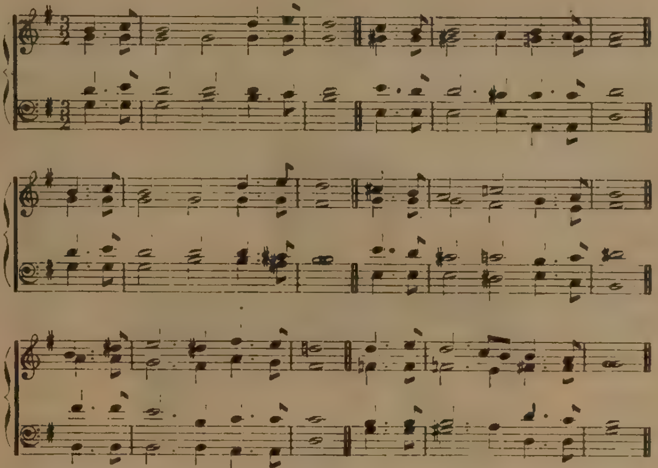
As oft as I hear the robin redbreast chant it as cheerfully in September, the beginning of winter, as in March, the approach of the summer, why should not we (think I) give as cheerful entertainment to the hoary frosty hairs of our age's winter as to the primroses of our youth's spring? Why not to the declining sun in adversity, as (like the Persians) to the rising sun in prosperity? I am sent to the ant to learn industry; to the dove to learn innocency; to the serpent to learn wisdom; and why not to this bird to learn equanimity and patience? *Warwick.*

THE ANGEL'S MESSAGE.

Our Lord's birth was humble, and they were humble men to whom it was first made known; but the messenger who brought the news was of no humble order: an angel was sent from the presence of God to tell the glad tidings on earth, and the glory of the Lord shone round about the shepherds.

ROCK OF AGES.

W. P.



mf Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee;
Let the water and the blood,
From Thy riven side which flowed,
cr Be of sin the double cure,—
dim Cleanse me from its guilt and power.

p Not the labours of my hands
Can fulfil Thy law's demands.
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears for ever flow,
cr All for sin could not atone;
f Thou must save, and Thou alone.

p Nothing in my hand I bring;
Simply to Thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to Thee for dress;
Helpless look to Thee for grace:
cr Foul, I to the Fountain fly;
f Wash me, Saviour, or I die.

mf While I draw this fleeting breath,
pp When mine eyes shall close in death,
cr When I soar through tracts unknown,
See Thee on Thy judgment-throne,
pp Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee.

A. M. Toplady.

Yet they had no cause to fear. That heavenly glory, and the sudden appearance of such a messenger, might well startle them; but the angel's words, and the song of the heavenly host that followed, reassured them; we read of no fear afterwards.

What happy news it was! That very day a Saviour was born—the promised Saviour, Christ the Lord. The shepherds knew their own Scriptures. They knew that the Messiah was to come, and that He was to be of the line of David, and perhaps they were of the number of those pious Jews who were living in hope of His appearing.

If so, how happy were they to hear, "Unto you is born a Saviour;" and how did that heavenly song rejoice their hearts, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"

"Unto you" applies to us also; Jesus was born to be our Saviour; and the peace which He brought, and this goodwill toward men, we may have a share in.

Let us believe, with the simple faith of the shepherds. Let us believe, not only that Jesus was born that day at Bethlehem, but that He was born for us. Let us believe in Him as our Saviour.

The shepherds rose at once, and went to see; they found all as they had been told, and went back to their flocks, glorifying and praising God.

Too often the Gospel is only listened to. The sound pleases, but nothing comes of it. The hearer takes no step in consequence, does not rise to seek the Saviour, remains just where he was.

If the shepherds had not sought Christ, would they have found Him? If they had not left their flocks to go to Him, would they ever have returned with joy and praise?

Whatever our station may be, and whether we change or stay as we were, let us seek to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Saviour, to have more of the peace of God in our hearts, to walk closely with Him, and to live to His glory.

And let none be content to do nothing in making Jesus known to others. No sooner had the shepherds found Him, than they made known abroad what they had heard and seen. All wondered; perhaps some did more than wonder; some, it may be, were led to believe.

Mary heard the story too; pious as she was, and filled already with high and holy thoughts, what she now heard of the angel's words and the song of the heavenly host added to the store of thoughts and feelings and expectations already laid up in her heart.

Rev. F. Bourdillon.

* * *

TWO HEARTS.

ONE of the chaplains of the East India Company had held Divine service at Tannah, near Bombay, when a native woman applied for Christian baptism. She was, of course, told that Christian baptism was a rite too serious to be entered on without due preparation.

The woman burst into tears, and said that for two years she had been most miserable; she had, at the beginning of that period, met with a Bible in the native language, and as women in India were not taught to read, she induced her husband to read it to her occasionally in the evenings. This man was a native officer in one of the Bombay regiments.

She then told, in the most artless style, the workings of her heart, and said that she had discovered that her breast contained another or second heart. Sometimes one heart, which brought to recollection her crimes, sank her into the deepest sorrow for her sins, and directed her to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as necessary for salvation; the other heart would tell her not to mind, but to live on, and not care for all this.

At first, the bad heart had the victory; but for some time past the good heart had so troubled her, that she had resolved to set out for Tannah from the cantonment in which she lived, and to arrive there on that day on which she understood the clergyman would be there. Her grief at finding she could not at once be accepted was very great.

On this, the clergyman told her that God's laws permitted a man to have only one wife; and asked her if she was content to forsake the man with whom she was living, as he had another wife, and whether she would endeavour to abandon all her sins, as the holy laws of God demand.

She replied that she would do all this, and even live in the jungle if it were to God's honour. She had not spoken to a single missionary or other Christian; but from the reading of the Holy Bible only she had been thus aroused. She was accordingly admitted to baptism, and adorned her Christian profession by a consistent life.

* * *

WAS SHE A HEATHEN?

SOME gentlemen belonging to a Bible association, called upon an old woman, and inquired if she had a Bible.

She was very angry at being asked such a question, and replied—

"Do you think, gentlemen, that I am a heathen, that you ask me such a question?"

Then calling to a little girl, she said, "Run and fetch the Bible out of the drawer, that I may show it to the gentlemen."

They desired that she would not take the trouble, but she insisted that they should "see she was not a heathen."

Accordingly the Bible was brought, nicely covered. On opening it, the old woman exclaimed—

"Well! how glad I am that you called and asked about the Bible! here are my spectacles! I have been looking for them these three years, and did not know where to find them!"

Might not she be called a "heathen?"

He perceived that he was made a party in a joke that turned on himself.

HOW A PLUM PUDDING WAS MADE IN PARIS.

Most of our readers have heard of a famous attempt to make a real English plum pudding in Paris, and how it failed, in spite of all the art of the king's cooks, because they were not told to tie the materials in a cloth.

One of the French monarchs wishing to show honour to the English ambassador on Christmas Day, gave orders that his cooks should make a plum pudding for the foreign guest, and inasmuch as the cooks had no idea whatever of the way in which the eatable in question was to be put together—for they had never seen a plum pudding before, perhaps scarcely ever heard of one—he sent to England for a recipe for making it.

The recipe came, so many raisins, so much suet, and so much flour, etc. Everything perfect. There could not possibly have been a better recipe given. This was handed over to the cooks, with strict injunctions not to deviate from it by one hair's breadth; to observe it with the most perfect accuracy. They did so—the weight of the ingredients, their quality, the size of the copper in which it was to be boiled, the quantity of water, the duration of time—all was attended to. And the king spoke in dark mysterious hints to the ambassador of some unknown gratification which was in store for him.

Well, at the appointed time in the dinner, up came the pudding.

"There," said his majesty, "my friend, there! I have prepared a treat for you. There is your national dish, prepared in your national fashion. Eat and be merry."

But the ambassador, instead of eating and being merry, only stared and rubbed his eyes. The plum pudding was actually brought up in a tureen, and he was expected to eat it out of a soup plate, like soup, with a spoon! The fact was that though the king had had the best possible recipe sent him, and had had its injunctions most strictly attended to by his cooks, he had forgotten one little matter—he had omitted to tell them that it was *to be boiled in a cloth.*

Here is a story of a more successful attempt to get a plum pudding.

Dr. Schomberg, of Reading, in the early part of his life, spent a Christmas at Paris with some English friends. They were desirous to celebrate the season in the manner of their own country by having, as one dish at their table, an English plum pudding, but no cook was found equal to the task of compounding it. A clergyman of the party had, indeed, an old recipe book, but this did not sufficiently explain the process.

Dr. Schomberg, however, supplied all that was wanting, by throwing the recipe into the form of a prescription, and sending it to the apothecary to be made up. To prevent all possibility of error, he directed that it should be boiled in a cloth, and sent in the same cloth, to be applied at an hour specified.

At this hour it arrived, borne by the apothecary's assistant and preceded by the apothecary himself, dressed, according to the professional formality of the time, with a sword. Seeing when he entered the apartment, instead of signs of sickness, a table well filled and surrounded by very merry faces, he perceived that he was made a party in a joke that turned on himself, and indignantly laid his hand on his sword, but an invitation to taste his own cookery appeased him, and all was well.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

Part I.—A Mother's Request.

"I wish you'd sow those kidney beans, Ted dear, it's quite time they were in," said Mrs. Kerwyn to her son as he rose from the tea table.

"I can't see about them this evening, mother," was the reply, "for I've promised to go out at seven, and it'll be nearly that by the time I'm dressed."

"Dressed! Why, where are you going?" she asked in surprise.

"Oh not far," he answered impatiently, "to the 'Crown' if you wish to know. There's a club feast on, and they want me to give them a little music."

"Who are the *they?*" questioned his mother quietly.

"What's the use of telling you? you'd be sure to have something to say against them, although you don't know *one* of them," he answered angrily, as, with unnecessary noise, he returned his chair to its place against the wall.

Instead of carrying the bread platter and butter dish into the pantry, Mrs. Kerwyn put them down again on the table, and walked across to her son, who stood with his hands in his pockets looking moodily on the face of the tall grandfather-clock in the corner.

"Ted, my boy," she said kindly, laying a hand on his arm, "a month ago you wouldn't have given me such a disrespectful answer. Until you mixed with these new acquaintances you never spoke an uncivil word to me, you were on the way to win the great blessings which are given by God to every son who in every sense is a *good* son to his mother. Have you forgotten the punishment which God's Word declares shall be borne by those who despise the advice of their parents?"

Ted didn't reply; he turned his head and looked towards the window, and tried to appear as if his whole attention was fixed on a handsome dove which had seated itself on one of the branches of the fir tree in the garden hedge.

But no! his thoughts were really centred on those solemn words in the Book of Deuteronomy: "Cursed be he that setteth light by his father or his mother." And Agur's words, written in the Book of Proverbs, respecting "The eye that despiseth to obey his mother." Yes, he remembered those warnings perfectly, but he would not admit it, and presently his mother continued,—

"You're right in saying that I don't know your friends, Ted; but let me tell you that my bad opinion of the two whose names you have often mentioned to me—Sutwell and Hunt—was formed from what I learnt from *you*—and *only* you—about them."

"What have you ever heard me say about them?" he demanded.

"They never enter God's house, that they make fun of religion and of their parents. Now, Ted," she added solemnly, "you know that their conduct proves that 'there is no fear of God before their eyes,' therefore 'destruction and misery are in their ways.' They are *dangerous* companions; and oh, my boy, I say to you, in the words of wise Solomon, 'Walk not thou in the way with them, for their feet run to evil.'"

The lad shrugged his shoulders uneasily.

"You can't expect me to spend all my evenings at home," he said slowly. "I'm not a schoolboy now, and I think I might be allowed to enjoy an evening with a few friends without having such a lecture about it."

"I'm quite willing that you should spend your evenings pleasantly with *friends*, Ted—friends who will influence you for good and not harm, who will bravely refuse to do wrong because they fear to displease God, and bravely do what is right, because their chief wish is to please Him. With such as these I should have no cause to fear that your feet were treading the road to ruin, my dear boy."

Ted's conscience told him that his mother was right in all she had said, and there was a subdued tone in his voice as he replied—

"Well, I *must* go this evening, I can't break my promise unless there was a reason."

"There *is* one, Ted," replied his mother; "*I* wish you to stay at home to do something for me, and surely my wishes ought to be your *first* consideration."

"I couldn't tell Sutwell *that*," he confessed; "but look here, mother," he added firmly, "I promise that from to-night I'll begin to shake off those fellows—God helping me."

"God helping you," she repeated softly. "Ask Him, Ted—ask Him this evening—*now*."

He didn't reply, but, with a sigh, left her, and went slowly upstairs to dress.

Then she returned to her work of clearing the table, and when this was finished she went into the little parlour, and, standing by the window, looked upon the fair May scene outside. Presently she uplifted her eyes to the evening sky and prayed earnestly—as Hannah prayed—she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, her voice was not heard; but her petition that her boy might have strength to resist temptation, reached the Almighty ear.

Part II.—Ted's Decision.

As she ended her prayer, a vivid flash of lightning sprang from a cloud behind the trees in the distant south, and was followed by a loud peal of thunder and large drops of rain.

At that moment Ted entered the room, still in his working clothes.

"Mother," he said decidedly, "I'm not going, I know well enough that though those fellows are awfully jolly and amusing, they don't care a straw whether what they say and do is right or wrong, and I know that as this is so they are on the road to trouble, as the Bible says; and, of course, if I go with them, I shall have to share what falls upon them. As to breaking the promise, well," he added softly, "I remember poor father, in his last illness, telling me that the right thing to do when you find you've made a wrong promise *is* to break it, there would be no sin in that, he said the sin would be in keeping it, and so doing the thing that it was wrong to promise to do."

"He was right, dear," was the reply.

And then they stood together in silence and watched the storm—the first heavy storm that spring; and when it was over they walked round the little farm-house garden to enjoy the sweet streaming incense which the earth sent up from the wall-flowers, lilacs, mignonette, and other fragrant blossoms.

"God is very good," said the mother softly, as they returned to the house.

"Yes, He is," replied the lad solemnly, "and do you know, mother, after I asked Him to keep me from doing evil, a feeling came into me that made me give up the idea of going to the 'Crown.' I only wonder how I could think of going, for poor father begged me never to go to any place where I knew I should hear and see wrong things; and it's certain there's little else but wrong things to be heard and seen in a public-house."

And then, after a pause, the lad gently expressed his sorrow for the cross words he had spoken to his mother on that and on previous evenings lately; and when he retired to rest that night, his young heart was filled with greater peace than he had known for several weeks.

Very soundly he slept through the moonlit midnight hour, but his mother was awake and standing by her bedroom window listening to the loud voices which rose upon the balmy air.

Judging from the time, she imagined that the voices were those of the men who had been to the club feast, but the sounds came from the Grove plantation about a quarter of a mile off, and this she couldn't understand, as there was no footpath near it, nor was it in the direction of any cottage.

"There's a quarrel," she said to herself with a sigh as the voices grew louder; and then she thought she heard the rattle of sticks against each other as if blows were being attempted. After that the sounds gradually ceased, and when all was still again she returned to bed, having thanked God sincerely that her boy was safe under her roof.

The next morning Ted went to the blacksmith's to have a horse shod and when he returned home and sat down to breakfast his mother's quick eye saw that something was amiss.

"What's the matter, Ted?" she asked kindly as she handed him his coffee.

"Oh, mother," he exclaimed in a voice trembling with emotion, "how *thankful* I am that you talked to me as you did last evening: I *have* had a narrow escape!" And then he related the news which had spread that morning through the village, and had filled many hearts with surprise and some with grief.

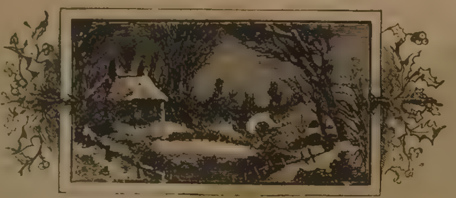
The old blacksmith had told him that most of the club feast party were intoxicated when they left the 'Crown' at eleven: and that instead of going home, Sutwell and Hunt with another young fellow were seen going slowly towards the Grove plantation.

They were followed and watched by the village policeman and two keepers, who had long suspected that there were poachers in the neighbourhood. They saw them kneel down and take eggs from several partridges' nests, and then they surprised them by putting in an appearance and accusing them of trespass and egging.

Half maddened by drink, and furious at having been caught, they commenced to threaten their accusers—using violent and abusive language, and, finally, blows were struck, and in the scuffle Sutwell so wounded one of the keepers that he had been taken to the hospital; and the three offenders to the police station.

"Oh, mother," added Ted solemnly, "if the keeper dies, Sutwell will be tried for manslaughter. How awful! There, I declare I don't know *how* I feel: if it hadn't been for you, mother, I should have gone with them last evening, and—and instead of being here this morning I should have been a prisoner! Mother, I *do* thank God that He heard your prayer and made me heed your words and pray for myself: ah, He heard and answered and kept me from the evil."

"We can never be thankful enough to Him," faltered Mrs. Kerwyn; and then they went on with their breakfast, and during the meal the mother wished for the son what the son wished for himself, namely, that whenever tempted to walk in sinful ways he might, by God's help, resist the temptation, remembering his Narrow Escape. *Daphne Hammonds.*



THE BRIGHTON PARCEL MAIL.

To the Editor of "The Cottager and Artisan."

Sir,—In your number for July last, I read an account of the accident to the Brighton Parcels Mail through fog last December, and being the coachman on that occasion I beg to correct it in some particulars. The picture itself is excellent.

On the night in question (December 22), I started from the depôt at London Bridge right time, 9.45 p.m., but owing to the fog I was twenty minutes late at Croydon. Beyond Croydon the Queen of Night shone beautifully, and the road being good I bounded along right merrily, and I was running through Croydon on the return journey right time. On reaching Broad Green I suddenly went into a fog bank so dense that I could not see a hand before me. I immediately slowed up, and felt my way cautiously along the tram lines; but on coming to the end of the line at Thornton Heath I was completely at sea. The fog was so thick that I could not see the lamp until I was right on it.

The first intimation I received of danger was my horses plunging furiously ahead through breaking through the ice. I at once applied the brake, but the mischief was done. In an instant the frightened animals had scrambled over the low wall which divides the public from the ornamental portion of the pond, and the front of the coach coming into contact with the wall assisted me in stopping them, the coach actually only being in the pond a trifle beyond its own length, as the two guards were able to step from the back on to dry land.

I had the greatest difficulty in soothing the excited animals, but having done so I dismounted from the box, and with the aid of lights at once saw that to get the horses out some one would have to go in. This wanted some facing with the thermometer at fourteen degrees of frost. The coach standing close to the rails at the side of the road, it was necessary to go into deep water to get them out. However, there being no volunteers for a cold bath, in I went up to my armpits in water and ice, and succeeded in getting one leader over the wall all right, when it broke away from me, and the ice giving way with it went under water, but found its way ashore eventually.

With the second leader I was not so fortunate. I got it over the wall, when it stood on a sheet of ice, which broke, letting the horse down and pulling me under water with it; but I would not lose my hold of it. I struggled up and caught hold of a spoke of the wheel, holding tight to the animal, which I got ashore all right. This, however, sprained the muscle of my shoulder, disabling me so that I could not drive home. The wheelers were got out by a man standing on the pole, without going into the water. Chain horses were attached to the coach, and it was drawn back into the road again. The same horses brought the coach to London, driven by the guard, and after all this delay was only ninety minutes late. It was not the guard who had his clothes frozen to him, but my unfortunate self, I being the only one who went into the water.

I walked to Croydon Station as best I could through the fog, my overcoat being frozen so stiff that I could not sit down in the train. On reaching London Bridge I walked to Finsbury and reported the matter to the manager; he advised me to go home, and come again in the afternoon. However, I went home and went to bed, from which I did not stir for twenty-four hours; thanks be to God I did not take cold over the job. I was laid up with my sprained arm for three weeks, and when I went to resume work found that my place had been filled up. However, my friends at the General Post Office took the matter up, and kindly laid my case before the Postmaster-General, who very generously gave me a substantial solatium for my injuries, having in view my good conduct since the starting of the night mail service. I may here mention that this was my first accident through fog, although I am the oldest servant on night mail service, every one of the other coaches having been in ditches or turned over through the same cause.

Apologising for this long letter, I remain, sir, yours faithfully,

J. F. Crown, Coachman.

* * *

CHRISTMAS FARE.

Christmas Pudding for a Family.

Put to soak over-night half of half a quartern loaf, slightly press out the water, and crumble it into a pan large enough for mixing in. To this add a pound and a-half of currants, the same quantity of raisins stoned, or sultanas, a tablespoonful of mixed spice, an ounce of bitter almonds chopped fine, a quarter of a pound of mixed peel, half a pound of sugar, and half a pound of suet chopped small.

Mix these with the bread crumbs first, and then stir in half a quartern of flour. It is best to get the materials well mixed together dry before the water is added. A little salt should be thrown in, and then mix with water to the required stiffness. It should be pretty stiff, or it will not bind properly, and your pudding will fall to pieces when it is turned out.

The cloth must be tied very firmly and closely, and then let the pudding boil five hours, and it cannot fail to give satisfaction.

Mince Pies.

One pound of apples, pared, cored, and chopped small, half a pound of raisins stoned and chopped, half a pound of currants, a teaspoonful of mixed spice or grated nutmeg, and a little cinnamon if the nutmeg is used. A quarter of a pound of mixed peel, a quarter of a pound of sugar, the rind of a lemon chopped small, and the juice pressed into the mixture. A little suet may be added. but this is quite optional.

The whole should be well mixed together in a basin, and it is all the better if it is made a week or two before it is wanted. It can be kept in a wide-mouthed bottle or jam jar; press it in close and tie paper over it until it is required for use.

When the pies are wanted make the crust in the following way, it will well repay the extra trouble:—Allow a quarter of a pound of butter, lard, or dripping to every three-quarters of a pound of flour, but whatever may be used in this way, whether dripping, or butter, or both, beat it with a fork in a basin until it is about the consistence of cream. Even mutton dripping may be used to make a light pie crust if it is first beaten up in this way before mixing with the flour. A pinch of salt and a little baking powder will improve the crust, but mix quickly and lightly, handling it as little as possible if you wish your crust to be light.

The pies may be made in small tin patty pans, or in a shallow dish or plate. Line the dish and cover with the pie crust rolled out thin, and bake in a moderately quick oven. If they are baked in little tin dishes they should be loosened at the edges with a knife, and turned out while they are hot, care being taken not to break them.

Apple and Tapioca Tart.

This makes a nice change for a winter pudding or pie, for it can be used either way. Put a quarter of a pound of tapioca to soak the night before it is required, and if apples are dear, half a pound of apple-rings, but if fresh apples are used a pound will be required, and these must be peeled and cored, and cut in slices. Put a layer of apples at the bottom of a dish, then a little grated nutmeg and sugar, and a couple of cloves, then a layer of tapioca, and a little more sugar. Then apples again, until the dish is full. If the apple-rings are used a little water should be poured in before the crust is put on. A plain crust may be spread at the top, or a pudding may be made by adding a little more water and sugar.

Apple-rings are a very useful substitute when apples are dear, and these, with stewed prunes or currants, make a capital dish for children.

Apples and prunes put to soak over-night make an excellent pie; a little spice, sugar, and a few pieces of lemon peel should be added by way of flavouring.

A Nice Marmalade Pudding.

Put a round of bread to soak an hour before. Crumble this, and add about an equal quantity of flour, about half a pint of each. To this add about two ounces of suet, chopped fine, a tablespoonful of sugar and three of marmalade, or jam of any sort might be used, or the rind and juice of two lemons, or a cupful of desiccated cocoa-nut previously soaked in milk would make a nice change. Whatever is used, a little milk should be added to moisten it, and when well mixed together the whole should be put into a basin that has been well greased with a greased paper on the top before the cloth is tied on. Then boil for two hours, taking care that the water does not rise to the top of the basin. Of course the saucepan-lid must be kept very close all the time, and boiling water added as the water wastes.

Fig Pudding.

Cut up half a pound of figs into small pieces, chop a quarter of a pound of suet, and mix these with half a pound of bread crumbs, half a pound of flour, and a little sweet spice if liked. When these have been thoroughly mixed dry, wet down with as much treacle as will make a stiff batter, and boil in a basin well greased for two hours.

A Nice Plain Plum Pudding.

Soak a good thick round of bread, or a few pieces that may be left in the bread pan, about half a pound; well crumble this, and then add a quarter of a pound of currants, a quarter of a pound of raisins, stoned, a quarter of a pound of suet, half a pound of flour, and half a pound of treacle, or, rather, golden syrup, as it is usually called, for this has not the strong flavour that treacle has. Mix all together thoroughly, and boil in a well-greased basin for three hours.

GETTING READY FOR CHRISTMAS.

Emily was busy stirring mother's wonderful Christmas pudding. Father's master had sent home a turkey and other good things as a present, and mother was preparing a real feast for Christmas day.

Emily's young arms soon tired of her task, for pudding mixing is heavy work.

"Why, Emily, tired already?" asked mother. "Surely not tired yet, darling!"

"Yes I am, mother."

"Oh, but try again, dear, else how shall we ever get the pudding properly mixed?"

Emily did try her best once more, but soon had to leave the pudding, as she could scarcely move the wooden spoon through the heavy mass of wet fruit and flour.

"Oh, mother, however can you keep on so long and do it so quickly as you do?"

"My darling, we may learn a lesson even from such a simple act as this.

"You said this morning that you would be able to mix and stir the pudding for me. But I said that you would soon get tired of such hard work, but you didn't think so. Let your failure teach you to believe father and mother in future when they do not think as you do.

"But do not be downhearted, little one. You have done what you could, and nothing more is expected of you. Always do your best, Emily, and you will do well. Carry the lesson through life; at school let the best of your time and mind be given to your studies, and if you find you cannot do all that others can, do not let that dishearten you, but persevere till at last you succeed.

"And as years go on, and you have to take your place in the busy world, do what you can, leaving the rest to God; and at the end of life you shall hear Jesus say, 'Well done, good and faithful servant,' for Jesus will be satisfied if He is able to say of you 'She hath done what she could.'"

MAB.

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